

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH MAX HORLICK

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Dr. Max Horlick on October 30, 2009, in Silver Spring, Maryland, with Shaun Illingworth. Dr. Horlick, thank you very much for having me here today.

Max Horlick: You're very welcome.

SI: Okay.

MH: Glad to see you.

SI: Good to see you again, too. Can you tell me where and when you were born?

MH: I was born in New York City and spent my first week there, and the rest of my youth was in south of New Brunswick, South Brunswick Township, in New Jersey.

SI: What were your parents' names?

MH: It was Anna and Harry Horlick.

SI: Your father was originally from Russia.

MH: Both parents were originally from Russia.

SI: Starting with your father, what do you know about his family background? Do you know anything about the family when they were in Russia?

MH: Unfortunately, not all that much. Back when I was young, kids didn't have very much curiosity, and I've always regretted not ask[ing] them many, many questions. My father and mother were born in what's now White Russia, and they went to public school, and then, they had to flee, basically. They had to flee. At that time, people were being ... persecuted, they lived like serfs, practically, and life was pretty rough. There was a manifestation called the *pogrom* in which the locals were stirred up by the authorities to attack Jewish families. Also, the young people, at that time, were against the royalty, against the Czar, and to speak up was extremely dangerous. ... My father and my future uncle had to flee, because they were becoming politically active against the Czar. "Politically active" meant, really, being pro-Communist, and so, they fled to America early in the 1900s and came into New York.

SI: Did they ever talk about being subjected to the *pogroms*, or was it more of just a general fear?

MH: My mother did, my mother did. [She said] that it was awful. People would come galloping in by horses and just attack, rape and kill people, and life was extremely primitive at that time and people were very superstitious. She tells the account that a girl was killed by lightning, and so, they submerged her in sour milk, thinking it would revive her, and they had all sorts of peculiar superstitions, which, strangely, still persist. A couple of years ago, our son, who lives in San Diego, went to visit a friend in the Ukraine and, in the Ukraine, he took a train. ...

He opened a window and people started screaming and yelling, "Don't do that. You'll catch cold," and my very first memory was when my mother and grandmother'd come into our farmhouse and start saying, "*Oy a tsug, oy a tsug*," which means, "Oh, oh, a draft." They thought a draft caused colds and, in that area of the world, they still do.

SI: Wow.

MH: Yes.

SI: These folklore-type beliefs, were they held by people in the Jewish community or were they outside the Jewish community?

MH: Everywhere.

SI: Everywhere?

MH: Everywhere, except the others were probably poorer and they were not attacked in these *pogroms*, but there was a great deal of superstition, and, at that time, things are very primitive. My mother said that wolves used to come and peek in the windows in those days.

SI: Were they both from farm families?

MH: No, no. Farming was forbidden. Land ownership was restricted, and so, people in the Jewish communities had to be either tradesmen, or, for some reason, the lumber industry was open to them. ... My mother's father was killed by a falling tree. He was a lumberman who owned a forest.

SI: Were they in their late teens or early twenties when they emigrated?

MH: My mother was in her late teens. I think my father was probably in his early twenties.

SI: Did they talk about if it was difficult for them to escape from Russia? Did they have to use any kind of technique to get out?

MH: No, they never talked about it.

SI: What about the journey over or coming into this country, if they came through Ellis Island?

MH: No, no. Apropos of that, believe it or not, my wife and I were in Edinburgh, Scotland, years ago, and we stayed in a bed and breakfast and it turned out the owners were Jewish. We asked, "How did you ever come to Scotland?" and their story was that their grandfather or great-grandfather left Russia, paid for a trip across the ocean, sailed and sailed and sailed and landed. He thought he was in America, he got off, [laughter] and this had had happened a number of times. When he found out where he was, he had no money, didn't know the language and he had to remain there.

SI: Do you know if both your parents came straight to the US or if they had to go somewhere else?

MH: No, they came straight to the US. In the archives, there are records ... of the passengers of the boats, and our son, Rob, traced when they came to America, which was around 1905 and 1912, respectively, and, usually, they arrived with no money whatsoever and they had to be picked up in Ellis Island by a relative. My mother, who was in her late teens, was put in a cage in Ellis Island. She didn't speak any English and nobody came to pick her up and she was sitting there, crying and crying. ... Finally, her brother came and picked her up in Ellis Island.

SI: Family members had already immigrated to the US.

MH: Yes.

SI: Did they originally settle in New York?

MH: Yes, in New York.

SI: Did they ever talk about how difficult it was to adjust to life in the US? Did they say how quickly they picked up the language or found jobs?

MH: No, they never talked about difficulties. This is sort of the "land of opportunity" and they were very happy to be here. The only problem was, the émigrés, when they first came here, didn't know English and had to get jobs, and jobs were available in the sweatshops. In those days, there were no labor laws, no labor protection, and they had to work, on sewing machines or making shoes, twelve, fifteen hours a day, seven days a week, and there were no sanitation laws. They lived in tenements; these are tiny, little apartments. There was no air conditioning in those days, ... somewhere in, I suppose, the Bronx, or what's now Harlem, and life was difficult, but I think they appreciated being here.

SI: Do you know how they met?

MH: Yes. My mother was proposed to, she was living in New York, by, I think, a druggist in Philadelphia and he was very well-off, but she wanted her mother to live with her and the druggist wouldn't hear of it. So, my father's best friend introduced her ... to her future husband, my father, who said it's okay ... if her mother lived with them. ... Shortly after they were married, they moved to a farm in New Jersey, where they lived ever after, and where I grew up.

SI: Did your mother come over with her entire family or did they come individually?

MH: No, no, absolutely alone, absolutely alone, incredible. These people would get on a boat, [in] what's called steerage. They were sleeping and living armpit to armpit and elbow to elbow. I've seen pictures of them, and perhaps you have, and movies, and they came across the ocean. I don't quite know how they survived [laughter] or how they ate, but she came over by herself and each one came all by himself, not with any family.

SI: How much of the family eventually did wind up in the United States, on both sides?

MH: Well, my mother, her sister and one brother, and there was another brother, an artist, in Russia, and he never came out. ... They corresponded with him for a number of years, but it became very, very dangerous, under the Communists, to be writing to somebody, and so, they never heard from him again, and my father and one brother and one sister came out, individually.

SI: Are you the oldest sibling or is your brother older?

MH: No, I'm the oldest sibling.

SI: Okay, and you have a younger brother.

MH: My sister passed away, years ago, and there's a younger brother. He's a dentist in South Brunswick and lives in Princeton, Dr. Leon Horlick.

SI: Focusing now on your youth in South Brunswick, what are some of your earliest memories of growing up in that environment?

MH: I grew up exactly like Abraham Lincoln, exactly like Abraham Lincoln. [laughter] We had no electricity, no running water, ... there were just outdoor facilities and the house was heated by one central iron cook stove in the living room. There was no such thing as insulation, no such thing as air conditioning and, in retrospect, it was extremely primitive, but ... people didn't know any better. ... When we became five years old, my sister and I walked about a mile, along dirt roads, to a one-room country schoolhouse. The time was a lot of fun for the kids, but it must have been very, very difficult for parents. At that time, the way to get a mortgage was through the Federal Land Bank. Congress had created a program for financing farms, and my father would occasionally drive to Springfield, Massachusetts, which was about a two-day drive in those days, [laughter] to the Federal Land Bank. People were very, very poor and it took, perhaps, thirty years to pay off the mortgage. So, all those years, they just paid the interest on the mortgage. ... [Editor's Note: Dr. Horlick is referring to the Farm Credit System, administered in New Jersey by the Federal Land Bank of Springfield in the early twentieth century.] The schoolhouse, as I say, was eight grades in one room. In back of the school were two outhouses, [laughter] one for girls and one for boys, and there was no such thing as bussing and there was no such thing as snow days. One time, when we were walking to school, we were caught in a hailstorm. Well, we just ran all the way. School was never, never closed.

SI: Where was the school? Was it also in South Brunswick?

MH: It was in ... Fresh Ponds, New Jersey, Fresh Ponds, and east of Fresh Ponds, New Jersey, was open farmland owned by Brothers Van Dyke, who had been there, ... the family had been there, Dutch, for about three hundred years, or two hundred years. ... About a mile east of the school, there was a pond and in the pond were snapping turtles, and the boys would wave a stick, a snapping turtle would nab on to the stick and the boys would drag the turtle into school to scare the girls. Believe it or not, just east of that now is the Jersey Turnpike, and what was entirely farmland, Jersey was then a garden state, no more farms, no more farms, and the Turnpike runs

through what were the Van Dyke Farms. [Editor's Note: The two-hundred-acre Van Dyke Farm was first deeded to the family in 1688 and was sold in 1957. Presently, all that remains is the farmhouse, which is now on the New Jersey Registry of Historic Places.]

SI: Did your family own the land or did they rent the land?

MH: No, they owned the land. ... Along the Davidson Mill Road, [in what is now North Brunswick, New Jersey], was perhaps a hundred, 120 people strung along, farmers.

SI: How far away were you from your nearest neighbor?

MH: Oh, ... just a couple hundred yards, yes.

SI: It was not distant or isolated.

MH: No, no, and shopping was done in New Brunswick, and, originally, by horse and wagon. ... Now, to drive into New Brunswick by highways is maybe seven minutes. [laughter] In those days, it was a whole half a day. The family had to devote an entire day to driving back and forth. However, there was a trolley car running through there. It had been there for, like, a hundred years or something, from Trenton to somewhere north, perhaps Elizabeth. [Editor's Note: The trolley line was formed in 1902, with service reaching the New Brunswick area in 1904. The northern terminal station was in Jersey City, NJ. Prior to that, a series of independent railroads and traction companies had serviced the area since the mid-1800s.] ... So, my mother would take the trolley into New Brunswick and bring back groceries, but, as in Lincoln's time, the farmers were pretty well autonomous. There was a dirt cellar and, in the cellar, you could store, all winter, beets, all root crops, beets, potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, whatever grew in the ground, and the women had to can for the winter. My mother and grandmother would, for example, make two hundred jars of tomatoes for the winter, and, typically, in a farm would be a huge barrel of apples, which could be kept in an unheated basement most of the time. In some of the farms, let's say from Eastern Europe, like from Poland, they would have a huge barrel of hard cider, typically, and out of the barrel was hanging a hose. ... You went down there and drank from the hose, everybody did, and, also, back in the one-room country schoolhouse, the farmer across the street brought in a big jug of water and one dipper [laughter] and everybody drank from that one dipper.

SI: What kind of chores did you have to do around the farm as a child?

MH: Well, as a small child, I didn't do any, but, later on, ... when I was in high school or college, I'd get up around, I don't know, five-thirty and give water to the chickens, feed the chickens, give water to the cows, and then, wash and dress and go off to school. This was typical.

SI: How many hours a day did you devote to farm chores and house chores?

MH: Well, in the morning, I would say one-and-a-half to two, in the morning, and, after school, I would say, again, two hours.

SI: You described it as very primitive, with no electricity. When did your family get electricity, plumbing and those more modern amenities?

MH: I think it was 1928 or 1929, the Rural Electrification Administration, or something like that, was established and my father, being an activist, got active and they put up telephone poles and electricity poles. [Editor's Note: The Rural Electrification Act was signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936. However, the Rural Electrification Administration had been established by executive order the previous year.] We got telephone, old-fashioned telephone, and it was a party line and there was an operator. I guess operators don't exist anymore. You lifted the receiver, cranked a crank and out would come a human voice and you'd tell the number. There was a kid in the neighborhood, his name was Lester Heinz, the greatest comedian I've ever heard, who could imitate accents. Every household spoke two languages, Polish and English, German and English, Hungarian and English, and he could imitate voices. ... He would call up somebody, let's say a Hungarian family, or something, pretend to be somebody else and talk to them for fifteen minutes, and they'd never know the difference. He was incredible, yes.

SI: It sounds like this area was a real melting pot of different ethnicities.

MH: Yes, yes. Strung along the Davidson Mill Road, there were people from Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Russia, Italy. Each household was different.

SI: How did all the different groups get along?

MH: Fine, fine. Everybody was, so-to-speak, in the same boat, but we were just [friendly]; everybody was very friendly. Everybody knew [everybody else]. Each family knew each other's family, where each were working very, very hard. ... This is in the 1920s, and then, during the Depression, so, it was very, very hard to make a living. So, relatively speaking, the farmers were well-off. We had our own food. So, we never, you know, needed food, while in towns, like New Brunswick, men were selling caramel-covered apples, to make money, and there were breadlines. It was very, very hard times, at that time.

SI: Do you remember seeing that when you went to New Brunswick?

MH: Yes, yes, people selling apples. ... While I was still in elementary school, we boys would go into the woods and make tents, like the Indians made. We still had Indian knowledge, and the area was called Fresh Ponds. There were ponds all over and the ponds would freeze over and the boys would break up the ice and make rafts and we'd walk around on the rafts. One time, I fell into the icy water and I waded ashore, went to the teacher. She gave me hell, told me to go home, and so, I ran home, a mile. ... Halfway home, on the side of the road was the area drunk, Bill Lempy, we called him "Bill Empty," and he started to chase me. He was drunk. So, I ran home and, after all, I got heck at home also, but I didn't get sick, I didn't get sick. In those days, there was one doctor for the area and he came by horse and buggy, and, later, by Ford, and he had pink pills, white pills and an enema. That's it, [laughter] but nobody ever died; no kids ever died. Things were very, relatively, primitive.

SI: You described your father as an activist. Was he involved in local politics?

MH: Yes, he was involved in various things. One was, farmers had to buy feed from a feed dealer. About, again, ... a mile-and-a-half, in a different direction, was an old mill. To digress a bit, old mills were very important in American culture and world culture. So, in that area, there was a sawmill, a grist mill, for making grain, a cider mill, which made cider, and probably other mills. So, the miller charged an exorbitant amount for feed for the cows and chickens. So, my father helped organize a huge co-operative in Hightstown, New Jersey, called the Central Jersey Farmers' Cooperative, and farmers from miles and miles around became members. I personally went to one of their meetings, my father was presiding, and there was almost chaos. The farmers were all individualists. ...

SI: What would they argue over, prices?

MH: Yes, labor costs, prices, type of grain and just general conditions, and he would be screaming, "Order, order, order," yes. ... He helped found the first Jewish cemetery and was active in other things, a political club in New Brunswick and things like that.

SI: When you were growing up, was religion an important part of your life?

MH: No. My parents were pro-Communist, [laughter] so, my father believed, and the Communists believed, that religion, and this applies to Russia, was the root of all evil. ... If Russia didn't have any religion, then, there wouldn't be religious prejudice, and so, we didn't have any religion, at that time, and, in playing with other kids and other families, the subject never came up. We never thought about religion. The neighbors never talked about it, just wasn't a part of life, strangely.

SI: To what degree was your father interested in Communist theory? Did he read the works of Marx and Engels? Were they in the home?

MH: Yes, yes. He was very absorbed in Communism and had me read books about it. [laughter] ... His argument was, "If you have a planned economy," let's say, take, for example, shoes, which is an example in one of the textbooks, "you'll never have a shortage or surplus. You plan ahead, so, you never have shortages, surplus or hardships, you never have unemployment." That's the way he saw it. The way I saw it was, the Communists were killing people, mass murder. Stalin wiped out millions of people. It didn't seem to make any difference to him. He thought about the theory and I thought about the practice. It was extremely shocking, and even horrible, but he believed in the theory of it, and, in a way, the theory of it sounds okay.

SI: He never became dissuaded by what came out of Russia later on, such as their alliance with the Nazis. I know many others who followed Communism kind of fell away from it at that point.

MH: Oddly enough, I never understood this, whatever Stalin said, he believed, and I think, when Stalin was trying to get along with the Nazis, I think he may have believed that. Coincidentally, ... the Russians established a Jewish republic up against China. It was called Birobidzhan, and

some people came around and tried to persuade my father to go and be a farmer there. He said, "No," thank God, because it didn't work out. It was pretty horrible.

SI: Was the Zionist movement ever discussed in your household?

MH: No. Pro-Communists weren't Zionists. [laughter] No, it just never came up.

SI: In your household, was there anything that you might call "Old World" traditions, in food or customs?

MH: You've hit on something amazing. My mother was an extreme food faddist, long, long before it became popular. She and our neighbor, Mrs. Heinz, across the street, were basically pure foodists and vegetarians. Their "patron saint," you might say, was called Victor H. Lindlahr. ... By the way, we got radio somewhere along the line, probably in the 1920s. Before we got radio, the only thing that farmers did was sit around and talk, with candles or a kerosene lantern, and go to sleep. ... When radio came on, it became the custom to stay up and listen, and there was this guy, Victor H. Lindlahr, who preached pure food and all the stuff you've heard for decades since then. [Editor's Note: Dr. Victor H. Lindlahr disseminated his nutritional philosophy through radio programs throughout the 1930s and published the 1940 book *You Are What You Eat*.] This was the very first, and so, we only ate whole wheat bread, we ate vegetables, no meat, just our own chickens, and our diet was incredibly pure. What we didn't know was, we made our own ice cream out of sweet cream and the sweet cream was probably eighty percent fat. We ate our own cheese, had fat, we ate cream, milk, huge quantities, and our own eggs, and very, very high in cholesterol, but whoever heard of cholesterol at that time? ... A typical lunch would be dandelion green salad, maybe with carrots and beet tops in there. As a result, I was very thin, and my father used to yell at me for being very thin. [laughter] When my brother was growing up, he refused to do that and he ate steak. So, he was much bigger than I. [laughter] So, food was a favorite discussion. We didn't know chocolate. The only luxury was, there was a baker, originally from Connecticut, the truck would drive around, delivering whole wheat bread and cupcakes. The cupcakes were the only luxury. ... Speaking about delivery, what did people do in early America when there was no transportation? Supplies came to us. For example, a horse and wagon would come through, with a bell jangling, and he was the junk man. He bought junk, and I guess sold it, and there was another horse ... and wagon [that] would come by and the man would call out, and he was what's called a rag picker. This was in Lincoln's time also, I'm sure, and he bought old clothes and rags, and then, the baker came around. Things were delivered like that. So, you didn't have to go anywhere for supplies.

SI: You mentioned earlier that your father would sometimes drive up to Massachusetts in regards to the mortgage. How did he get there? Did he have his own transportation or did he hitchhike?

MH: Well, by and by, he bought a Model T Ford. The reason why he bought the Model T Ford was, he developed an egg route in Brooklyn. Farmers were extremely poorly off in those days. Prices hadn't gone up on their products for maybe decades, and so, in Brooklyn, New York, he would deliver eggs to individual families, and did very well. So, we were perhaps the most prosperous farm in the area because of that, and so, he needed a car. ... He would drive from

South Brunswick into Brooklyn, and this is an entire day's journey. There were no highways. He would drive through New Brunswick, Highland Park, Metuchen, all the way, Elizabeth, Newark. ... This is very, very arduous, and very, very slow, and, in winter, it was incredibly bad. ... He would have to take a ferry into Brooklyn. So, he would leave, like, four o'clock in the morning and come back the next morning about four o'clock in the morning, deliver it.

SI: Did you ever have to help him out with his route?

MH: I didn't go with him, but preparing the eggs was quite something. It was mass production. He would have cases. Each case contained thirty dozen eggs, and I don't know how many there were, maybe fifteen or twenty in his car, truck, and you had to candle the eggs. Candle means you put the egg up against the light and twirl it and, if there was a blood spot, you'd throw it away. People wouldn't eat eggs that had blood spots in them. ... So, preparation took an entire day and the eggs had to be sorted by size, and my mother did this by hand. Eventually, I persuaded them to get a machine that did candling and weighing. So, this is pretty major.

SI: When did they get the machine?

MH: I guess while I was at Rutgers.

SI: Really?

MH: Yes, I would say maybe in the middle '30s, and one of the places he delivered eggs was called Sheepshead Bay, in Brooklyn, and he would have a bucket with him and bring back a live fish. One morning, I heard my mother scream and I ran downstairs; it was a huge catfish with whiskers. She'd never seen one of those before. [laughter] So, that's what life was like there.

SI: There was actually just an exhibit on agricultural machines and agricultural history at the Alexander Library on the College Avenue Campus.

MH: Oh, yes.

SI: I saw some of those candling machines.

MH: Oh, yes, you did.

SI: It seems like, before that came along, like you said, your mother ...

MH: All by hand, everything by hand.

SI: It sounds like most of your mother's day was probably devoted to food preparation and farm work.

MH: And she worked like a horse. She would handle hundred-pound feedbags like nothing.

SI: Wow.

MH: You had to sling them around. ... She did the sorting and most of the candling, although I helped, also, and canning and all that.

SI: Did you ever, at different times of the season, hire people to help on the farm?

MH: Yes, yes. I guess, certainly while I was at Rutgers, and possibly while I was in high school, they had a hired man who helped out with all the chores. ... As my father did better and better, he built more and more chicken houses and there was more and more work, and so, we had to have a hired man, yes. The hired man usually was a local drunk, invariably a local drunk. When they got paid, they'd get off with their hard-[earned money] and get drunk, yes. [laughter]

SI: Does anything stand out about the era of Prohibition?

MH: Yes, yes. Davidson Mill, the village where I was, was very, very prim, very, very prim. I didn't know how religious they were, but everybody was very, very moral. Nobody smoked, nobody drank, at least not openly, and, to our immense amazement, one day, we saw, in the local paper, the *Daily Home News*, that a neighbor had been arrested for running a still, [laughter] Steve Ur. He lived about a half a mile down the road. Nobody knew. I don't know how the police found out, but, basically, people didn't drink. Actually, there was an Italian family who ... had their own grapes and made their own wine, "*dago* red," awful tasting stuff, but they didn't sell it, so, I guess that was okay. So, Prohibition didn't mean anything. We were really very, very isolated, in a sense, but my father knew what was going on in the world. He had all kinds of magazines, including something called *Current History*, and I recall, in the 1930s, *Current History* had a story that there was deep unrest ... in Southeast Asia, there was a war going on in Africa, there were thunderclouds on the horizon in Europe, there was deep recession, and, in a way, it's not so different from now. It was amazing. This is just before World War II broke out. So, he was very politically oriented and we had long, long political discussions. He was a real intellectual, my father.

SI: How did he feel about Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal?

MH: Oh, very much in favor, very much in favor, because there was an impact on us. For example, they paved the roads, the WPA [Works Progress Administration], and they built a bridge across the local stream, and things began to look up, especially for farmers at that time. ... So, they were very pro-Roosevelt.

SI: What about your mother? Did she ever express any political views, or was she active in any groups?

MH: My mother was, you might call [her] a Russian intellectual. In Russia, she read the famous writers and knew them. ... People would come from New York to spend days on the farm in the summer and she'd engage in intellectual discussions with them. ... She loved music. When I was four years old, she took me to the Metropolitan. So, she sank into farm life after awhile and just became a farm woman. She only read local newspapers, didn't read books anymore, didn't follow what was happening much anymore, and worked like a dog.

SI: Were you able to sense if she was disappointed by this change in her life?

MH: No, she just settled into it. She seemed content. She forced me to go to concerts at Rutgers. She wouldn't come along, never come along.

SI: Really?

MH: She just renounced all those aspects of life. I didn't appreciate it or understand it at the time, and the people who came from New York, [whom] she would have these discussions with, I wish I'd had the intellectual curiosity to figure out who they were. [laughter] As a kid, you have no curiosity.

SI: They were not relatives.

MH: No, no. New York people would come and stay on the farm for awhile. There's an ancillary story to that.

SI: Please.

MH: The people across the street, the Heinzs, gave up farming and set up a camp, for city kids, and the country kids didn't appreciate the city kids at all. The country kids would play jokes on the city kids. For example, there were ... peppers, little hot peppers. They looked like tomatoes. They'd feed them to the ... city kids, and they were so sharp, the kids would scream. ... Along our farm, there was poison ivy and my father burnt off the poison ivy; didn't mean anything to us, but, when a city kid was in the smoke, he got terrible poison ivy rash. ... It seemed like a different world, and, when the city kids went back to the city to go back to school, they'd ask, "What do you do in the winter? It's bare here. There's nothing here, nothing," but, actually, ... I once wrote out, for our own kids, seventy-five different activities that kids could play. We had no boughten toys, except marbles, but there were so many activities.

SI: Can you give me a few examples of that?

MH: Well, we'd play stickball out in the fields, hide-and-go-seek. We'd build Indian tents. We'd pick up hickory nuts in the woods. We found out that sweet potatoes retain heat more than any other known substance. We'd build a fire, heat a sweet potato, put in our pocket, these are on cold days, and it'd stay warm for hours, and pick hickory nuts. We'd go skating, swimming in season, fishing. There were various games. One is called "dock on a rock." You'd put a rock on top of another rock, stood about fifty feet away and try to knock it off, and played tag, stamp collecting. I don't know. The word "boredom" didn't exist. Nobody ever, ever was bored. [laughter] There was just too much to do, and there were always chores. ... We'd wander through the woods, exploring. One time, a friend of mine, Fred Bishoff, and I were wandering in the woods and we came upon an abandoned mill. It was overgrown. It must have been abandoned a hundred years before, on the side of a pond, some sort of a mill. ... We would find abandoned houses, which we called haunted houses, all kinds of activities like that.

SI: Particularly in the 1920s, were you aware of any Ku Klux Klan activity in the area?

MH: No. ... [In the] 1920s, no, there were no black people around. When I went to New Brunswick, to school, it was totally integrated, but there were no black people around at all.

SI: Your family was not religious, but did you experience any anti-Semitism, growing up in that area?

MH: No.

SI: It sounds like, aside from your trips to New Brunswick, and maybe even New York, you were pretty much confined to that area.

MH: Yes.

SI: Was there any other traveling that you did?

MH: No. People just didn't travel. Occasional visits to the relatives in New York were it.

SI: Okay.

MH: ... Yes, no travel.

SI: Can you tell me a little bit more about your education in this one-room schoolhouse?

MH: Yes. I think we used *McGuffey's Reader*, which was a nineteenth century reader, and there was one teacher and eight grades. ... Sometimes, the boys would become a little bit wild. So, this one teacher, she was an older woman, she was perhaps twenty-three, took the worst boy and sat him on her lap. He never misbehaved again. [laughter] He was the butt of jokes. Also, farm kids were very, very shy, and we were afraid to ask permission to go to the outhouse. So, we'd fill our pants, in the first grade. It took awhile to get the courage to ask for permission. During recess, which was in midmorning, there were woods all around, we would go in the woods, run around, pick nuts, build tents. She would start, if I recall correctly, with the first grade, let's say reading, and then, go to the second, third and all the way up in reading, and then, arithmetic all the way up, and then, geography all the way up, and history all the way up. It was a traditional way of learning. In retrospect, we didn't learn all that much, I'm afraid, and, also, she had not much time. So, I couldn't learn arithmetic. The reason I couldn't learn arithmetic was, it would say, "Three and three equals," and there would be a question mark, and I thought the question mark meant something. I didn't know what it was, until somebody explained, [laughter] and I must have had trouble reading, because my mother hired some local girls to teach me, but, pretty soon, I was the best in school. ... Another time, the teacher had ... three kids in school and my mother had given me some cookies, which were so hard I couldn't bite into it. ... So, I scaled it, like a scaler, and it hit the teacher's son in the lip and cut his lip open. [laughter] It was very embarrassing. Also, if you spoke ungrammatically, like, "Ain't," she washed our mouth out with soap, literally washed our mouth with soap, and, if you misbehaved, she locked us in a cloakroom, a closed cloakroom, for half a day. ... I would sit there and cry and cry and the other

boys would laugh and laugh. ... The principal of the area would come around, threaten to take us to reform school, which scared me, but didn't scare the bigger boys. [laughter] ... Boys didn't take education seriously, so, it was very common for them to fail two and even three times. This kid, Lester Heinz, the comedian, was in the fifth grade, I think, three times, and finally dropped out of school.

SI: Did many children your age in that area leave school when they were old enough to work?

MH: After elementary school, I would say a large majority of them went to vocational school, which taught farming, homemaking, auto mechanics and, I think, maybe, electric; I don't think they taught electrical. There's no such thing, and they got a trade and worked somewhere in the area, to Bound Brook or New Brunswick, just locally.

SI: Were your parents encouraging you to look at higher education and going on to high school?

MH: When my mother first came to Davidson Mill, she would come via the Pennsylvania Railroad, and, in New Brunswick, she looked over the Rutgers Campus and said someday her kids would go there, and they did, [laughter] even though they had no money. ... It was, of course, anticipated that we would go to college. However, in those days, very frequently, a young man followed in their father's footsteps. It was taken for granted that you'd follow in your father's business and keep it, or farm and keep it going. Commonly, you'd see on a store or so, "Smith and Sons." You never see that anymore, and so, my father fully expected me to continue to work on the farm. ... He was extremely upset that I was going to study languages. The way I got to study languages was, my mother's brother, whose name was Bernard Golod, lived in New York and he never married. The story was that his beloved ran off with his best friend, and he never married. His ambition was to go to college. I wish I'd been smart enough to ask questions on this. He had no money whatsoever, zero money, and he had to give it up. ... He had a whole trunk load of college books, which he gave to my mother. ... I started reading these books early on and started reading language books and got interested in language, and that's how I started in language.

SI: It was interesting to me, I read an article on you, from when you received your doctorate in 2007, that mentioned that you eventually learned ten languages. The article indicated that much of your fluency came from growing up in a very linguistically diverse area. Was this part of it?

MH: Part of it, part of it. Well, let's start with German; into our neighborhood moved a German family and the boy of my age couldn't speak English. ... Yiddish is medieval German, and so, we started talking to each other and that's basically how I learned German. When I started studying French, in high school, a few farms away from us was a weird stone farmhouse. [During] summers, that farmhouse was rented by Madame Charisse. I don't know if you remember Cyd Charisse; she was a famous dancer in Hollywood. ... Cyd Charisse married somebody called Nico Charisse, Nico, and Nico's mother came to America in the 1920s with eleven ballet dancing children. As long as the family stuck together, they got a lot of publicity. When they broke apart, she sort of went downhill. Summers, she rented this farmhouse, which had a studio, and they were French, and so, I spoke French with them, Madame Charisse, and my sister took ballet dancing, which shocked my mother. There were three girls; Madame Charisse

turned them into something called the "Three Graces." They danced, and in filmy costumes, and for a puritanical place like Davidson Mill, this was extremely shocking. ... My mother was very upset and she didn't want me to hang around with the Charisse [Family]. They were incredible. One son, Andre, looked like a Greek god. Madame Charisse was originally from Greece, and the daughters were all gorgeous, but, anyway, we talked French. ... We also had a French neighbor, Madame Merlot, and I talked French with her, and that's how I picked up French. I picked up Spanish at Rutgers. Should I keep going, how I got the other languages?

SI: Yes, if you would like to.

MH: Okay. When I came to work for the government, this is many lifetimes later, they promised me a job in the Romance languages. So, [when] I came to work, I figured Portuguese, Italian or something, but it was Romanian and I had to learn Romanian. The Roman soldiers had lived in Romania for many, many years and created the Romanian language, which was related to Latin and sounded like Portuguese. ... I suppose we're going to talk about the Army later, but, in the Army, they sent me to study Italian at Haverford College, and so, gradually, all these languages accrued, you might say. ...

SI: In the 1930s, when Hitler took over in Germany and the situation overseas got more troublesome, refugees started relocating to communities in New Jersey. As far as you know, did any come to the area where you grew up?

MH: We didn't really know much about that. The first refugees I ever saw were at Rutgers. They were young men selling, I think, socks and ties. They were refugees. ...

SI: Were they students?

MH: No, no, just trying to make a living, and then, refugees bought farms, in Dayton and Monmouth Junction. We had a rural youth group. We used to play touch football and all that sort of thing, and one of the farms was owned by a family named Karg and they sold the farm to German refugees, about which I knew nothing. ... A number of the farms in Monmouth Junction were sold to German refugees, about which I knew nothing. My best friend, Jack Weintraub; well, let me put it this way. I used to go bowling in Highland Park with two guys and, one day, we went bowling and this fellow, Les, said, "Could you do me a favor and take out my girlfriend's cousin?" I said, "Okay," and Jack said [the] same thing, "Would you please take out my girlfriend's cousin?" So, I took out the first girlfriend's cousin and she was a nothing. The second girlfriend's cousin was a disaster. She's the one I'm married to. [laughter] ... Her name is Ruth, and I was supposed to go to the Rosenstock Farm and double date with Jack and Ruth and Cousin Francie. I showed up at the farm and the two girls were washing the dishes. Here I was, all dressed up, and they sort of ignored us and I was very upset. Jack was so eager to have somebody take Ruth out, he asked two guys. So, two guys were double dating with Ruth, and we had a terrible time. I didn't ever expect to see her again. A couple nights later--I'm coming to the German refugee part--a couple nights later, I walk Jack and Francie and Ruth. I was sitting there on the farm, listening to the radio, and I was wearing nothing but shorts. I put on clothes and we got in my car and we drove around all night. Ten dates later, I married her. [laughter]

SI: Wow. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

MH: Okay, they were German refugees.

SI: Can you repeat that?

MH: Yes. They were German refugees. I didn't know a heck of a lot about German refugees, but we visited her three uncles, each who had a farm around Jamesburg and Monmouth Junction. ... We saw each other about ten times and got married, and so, I married into a German refugee family. ... The German refugees were extremely successful, which other farmers resented. The reason they were more successful is, they came in at an economically super time. The war had broken out, markets were expanding, times were much better, better prices, better markets, and so, they all did very, very well, almost instantly, while the farmers from my father's generation had to struggle for thirty years to even pay off the mortgage. So, there was a good deal of resentment about that.

SI: Were there any cultural differences between the Jewish people who came from Eastern Europe and those who came from Germany?

MH: Yes, yes. When we got married, sixty-seven years ago, [laughter] both sets of parents were extremely opposed. My mother was opposed for the reason you say; Russian Jews and German Jews, it was a different civilization. She didn't approve. My father didn't approve because he said, "If you get married, it will change your draft status and the Army will get you," which is what happened. Ruth's mother was opposed because, in World War I, she married somebody going into the Army in Germany and he was immediately killed. ... So, here, her daughter was marrying somebody going into the Army. So, it [our wedding] was a sad affair. The mothers were weeping, just the two sets of parents and my little brother, and everybody predicted it wouldn't work. [laughter]

SI: When was that that you were married?

MH: It was August 14, 1942, yes, and I was going to be drafted shortly thereafter.

SI: Let us go back and talk more about your early education, before going into Rutgers.

MH: Okay.

SI: You wound up going to New Brunswick High after elementary school. You also went to school in Deans. Was that different from the one in New Brunswick?

MH: Yes, I wound up in Deans, seventh and eighth grades, and I was knocking off ninety-eight marks on the state exams. I came to Roosevelt Junior High School in New Brunswick and we country boys were lost, lost. We go into the gym and the teacher, the guy, throws us a

basketball; we'd never seen a basketball before. We didn't know anything that ... the city kids did and their education was so far advanced, I barely passed courses the first semester ... at Roosevelt Junior High. ... Also, my father insisted that I take business courses, [in] preparation for being on the farm, and arithmetic was not my strong point. So, I did miserably and, finally, [I] came to New Brunswick High and I switched to academic and was taking a double load. I took German, French, in addition to the regular classes. ... It took me about a year to catch up, and then, I did very well, except on mathematics, which I could barely pass, barely. ... The funny part about it [is], all three of our children are excellent in math. I got through New Brunswick High and went into Rutgers and, again, it was a terrible cultural shock, a double cultural shock. At Rutgers, the kids from large cities, like ... New York City and Newark, were much, much better prepared than we were. On the entrance exam in French, I did so well, they put me into sophomore French, instead of freshman French, which is a mistake, because the other students in sophomore French had come from large cities and [were] far, far more advanced than we. Also, at Rutgers, especially in the Language Department, they had the rule that only one person could get an "A," and I was competing with Newark and New York, maybe Philadelphia [kids]. They were really, really far, far more advanced than we were, and it took me a year to start to catch up. ...

SI: You mentioned earlier that sending children to college was difficult for your family. How were you able to accomplish it?

MH: That's a very good question. My mother took in kids from New York, in our little farmhouse. My brother, who was a little kid at the time, figures, "Where did we put them?" I think we had six or eight kids sleeping downstairs for the whole summer, and my mother fed them and I was the camp counselor. ... We did this every summer and that helped pay for the college. Also, back in elementary school, they developed a system, at that time, [for] banking. You opened a banking account in a bank in New Brunswick and we would contribute a quarter a week, or something like that, and, by the time I got to Rutgers, ... that bank account was hundreds and hundreds of dollars. So, that's how it was.

SI: Before you got into Rutgers, you obviously did a lot of farm work. Did you have to do any other jobs, part-time or during the summer?

MH: One time only. My best friend persuaded me to become a waiter in Mount Freedom, New Jersey, up near Morristown, but it didn't work out and I quit almost immediately. So, that's the only outside job I ever had.

SI: As you were growing up, did you ever get involved in any organized activities? It sounds like sports were not available to you in school.

MH: No. I was always a commuter and, therefore, it was impossible to do anything at school. At the end of New Brunswick High, there was the bussing I had to do. So, I never got involved in anything until I got to Rutgers.

SI: Just one quick question before we jump into your days at Rutgers. Before that, had the Rutgers Extension Service ever had an impact on your life?

MH: Very, very. When my parents moved to the farm, they had no experience, knew nothing about it, and so, my mother went to Agricultural Extension courses, I don't know how she did this, at Rutgers, and my father also. ... They learned about poultry and farming, and it really gave them very, very needed skills. It was extremely important and, whenever something happened to the cows or chickens, my mother would go to Rutgers and consult. Have you heard of Selman Waksman, the Nobel Prize winner?

SI: Yes.

MH: There was one other family, the Washkos, who never had anybody go to college, and they would go to the Agricultural School, where they could get a scholarship, and they sort of participated in soils. Selman Waksman knew that, in the Jewish faith, when you plunged a knife into the ground, it made it pure, kosher. He theorized there was something in the ground that did that. So, generation after generation, he had ... students test what it was in the soils. The two Washko boys did that. Eventually, a graduate student found out what it was. It was streptomycin, and Waksman got the Nobel Prize, but, in animal diseases and training or problems, they would go to the Agricultural Extension Service, [which] was very, very important for farmers in those days. [Editor's Note: Dr. Selman Waksman and his graduate student, Dr. Albert Schatz, discovered streptomycin in 1943. Waksman was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1952.]

SI: Did they ever have county agents come out to the farm for any reason?

MH: I don't remember. I just don't remember.

SI: Can you tell me about the process of getting into Rutgers? What did that entail?

MH: In those days, well, I simply applied; there were long, long questionnaires, which I submitted in handwriting, believe it or not. [laughter] ... Kids didn't know how to type in those days. A typewriter was something very exotic. ... I got recommendations from various neighbors, I guess, and from teachers in New Brunswick High, and was accepted. So, there was no problem, and I majored in languages.

SI: Did you ever consider any other schools or was it always Rutgers?

MH: Just Rutgers, just Rutgers

SI: Were you a commuter student for your whole time at Rutgers?

MH: Yes. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

MH: Once I got to Rutgers, it was, again, cultural shock. I told you going from a rural school to New Brunswick High was a cultural shock. Coming to Rutgers was a cultural shock because, again, the kids from the advanced systems, like New York and Newark, were way ahead of us.

SI: Even though you were a commuter, did you have to go through the freshmen rituals and initiations when you first got there?

MH: I suppose, but I never joined a fraternity. I didn't believe in it. I just didn't believe in it.

SI: Did they do the things they would make all freshmen do, like wear the hat?

MH: Yes, yes, I had a dink, it was called, yes. I went through all that. I can't remember much about it.

SI: Did you know immediately that you wanted to major in languages or was that something that you decided later?

MH: No. ... I want to talk about ROTC [Reserve Officers Training Corps] also.

SI: Sure.

MH: Yes, ROTC was mandatory, and I set a historical record for shooting at Rutgers. At the rifle range, I think we had a clip with, say, six bullets, and I had eight holes in my target. [laughter] One of our activities, as country boys, we would run, go around the woods with a rifle, hang bottles from a branch and shoot them. The city boys had no experience with guns, and so, the kid alongside of me was nervous and shot into my target. [laughter] I guess he was shaky, yes.

SI: What did you think about ROTC and having to take it for those first two years?

MH: Oh, I enjoyed it very much, I enjoyed it very much, and, later on, when we get to [the] Army, I'll have to tell you the impact.

SI: Can you describe the training? Did they ever take you out for any exercises?

MH: We did lots of marching, regularly, lots of marching. There was the rifle range, which I enjoyed, and there was a great deal of class work, terrain reading, which eventually stood me in good stead, believe it or not, and it was just very enjoyable. It was like a break from the classes, from the regular classes.

SI: Within your major, do any of the courses or professors stand out in your memory?

MH: Yes, yes. I recently wrote to the President of Rutgers [Richard L. McCormick] about this, and he misunderstood my letter. There was one professor, Clarence E. Turner, who taught how to think. Much more important than teaching languages, he taught how to think, and this has stayed with me forever. He had a profound influence, a very profound influence. In those days,

I guess all the professors were good. For example, in history, in those days, you memorized dates and figures, dates and figures. I think I had a course in "Europe Since Napoleon" and we had to memorize, like, 125 dates and figures; didn't mean anything. ... In the various French literature courses I had as a graduate master's candidate at Rutgers, he taught thinking, and I wrote this [in the letter]. The reason I wrote to the President was, he justly boasted about the faculty of Rutgers, how many have publications, how many have this and that. My question is, "How many are really inspiring teachers?" I wonder about that. Professor Turner didn't have a PhD, I don't think he ever had any publications, but he taught thinking. So, he was very, very outstanding, I remember.

SI: Do any other professors stand out?

MH: I'm thinking.

SI: I know, in French, [Edmond W.] Billetdoux is always mentioned.

MH: Oh, yes, Billetdoux, yes, yes. [laughter] He was quite a character, he was quite a character. Let's see, I studied Spanish with him, I guess. ... He was actually an actor and he was also a very inspiring teacher and taught lessons. ... When I came to teaching, I practiced his method, which was to ask lots of questions and give a daily quiz, which my students didn't appreciate. So, he influenced my teaching method, I would say.

SI: Did you become involved with any extracurricular activities?

MH: Yes, yes. I'll start with, first, failure. It was required to know how to swim at Rutgers. Otherwise, you couldn't graduate, and my mother had initially not allowed me to swim. I had hay fever and she thought it was bad for hay fever. So, the first thing I had to do is learn how to swim. So, that sort of eliminated other things. So, then, I went out for track, and the coach put me on the two-mile and you ran around the track; was it four or six times? ... I came back to the starting point all exhausted and I figured it didn't make any sense. So, I quit. Then, ... I became president of the French Club, which had its moments of embarrassment. Believe it or not, I'd never been to a fancy restaurant in my life, farm boy, and so, the faculty took the French Club officers to a restaurant in New Brunswick, the only fancy restaurant. I forgot the name. ... We had a meal and, when we ordered dessert, the professors deferred to me and I ordered rice pudding. ... I was chewing away at this huge mass of rice pudding and each one of them had ordered a slice of Roquefort cheese. I felt like a slob. [laughter] ... The German group had an honorary Germany society and I belonged to that. ... I think I did some debating. It's so long ago; let's see.

SI: Do you remember Professor [Richard C.] Reager?

MH: The speech teacher, yes, yes.

SI: Was he the debate coach as well?

MH: I think so. Yes, I remember him very well. He was very, very old-fashioned. ... In those days, the text, which may have been written by him, had mandatory gestures, pronation, and all this sort of thing, just like in Abraham Lincoln's time. They spoke with their hands. They were orators, and the day of the orators had gone, and what he didn't realize, and I didn't realize, is, when you have a subject you know about and are enthused about, you can speak very well about that subject. So, all of his teaching was in vain on me, but he tried, he tried.

SI: Were there any other activities that you were involved in?

MH: Oh, yes, the Commuter Club. Oh, yes, I was on the board of the Commuter Club. One time, I helped arrange a picnic for five hundred people and helped arrange an athletic competition among commuters; no, for the whole college, a track competition. So, I was very active in that.

SI: Was it an open competition?

MH: It was an open competition, for everybody. In other words, I arranged a track meet, and I just can't remember other things.

SI: It sounds like the Commuter Club was pretty active.

MH: Yes, it was very large and very active, and there was a commuter house, [the Student Union at 35 College Avenue]. Somebody else occupies it now. ... Since I wasn't a member of a fraternity, there were ping-pong tables in the basement of the commuter house and we would sit and study until it came our turn to play ping-pong, and then, if we won, we'd play again; if not, we're eliminated. The ping-pong champ of New Jersey was a Rutgers student and eliminated everybody. [laughter] I've forgotten his name. So, that's how we did a lot of study.

SI: Did you drive to campus or did you take a train?

MH: No, I drove every day. I went to every concert. I never missed a ... basketball game. ... One year, Rutgers, in basketball, lost only one game. The reason we were so outstanding is, we had an enormous center, George Buttle. He was six-[foot]-six and nobody else had anybody anywhere near that size. Now, six-six is a guard. ... The football team was miserable. There was a coach called J. Wilder Tasker. By the way, I've written a novel about all this being published by Author House. He was miserable. So, they hired a new coach called Harvey Harman who turned it around, and we beat Princeton, I think in 1938 or '39, for the first time since 1866, the first ever [intercollegiate] football game. This was on television recently. [Editor's Note: In 1869, Rutgers defeated Princeton in the first intercollegiate football game. Princeton went on to defeat Rutgers in every subsequent game until November 5, 1938, when Rutgers defeated Princeton 20-18.]

SI: What do you remember about that game and that day?

MH: The Princeton game?

SI: Yes.

MH: Oh, there was wild enthusiasm. I helped break down the goal posts and I took home a piece of the goal post, which my mother eventually threw away. Oh, we swarmed the field. Everybody was screaming and yelling. It was fantastic. Rutgers was very outstanding in football in those days for one reason. We played within our league, if you beat Lehigh, Lafayette, Hobart, little places like that. In other words, Rutgers was playing in its own class, but, eventually, it was decided to get into major leagues. I still follow Rutgers football.

SI: When you were on campus, did you have any on campus jobs?

MH: In a way. ... When I was going for my master's, it was on scholarship without stipend and I would type out exams and papers for the professors. That was it. ... All my friends had campus jobs with the ...

SI: NYA?

MH: ... Yes, NYA, yes, but I didn't need that. I didn't need it financially.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: During your time at Rutgers, the late 1930s, the war had not broken out yet in Europe, but Hitler had conquered Czechoslovakia and Mussolini had risen to power; was that ever discussed on campus?

MH: Everybody was oblivious, just absolutely oblivious. We were just a few years off from being in the Army. [laughter] No, no, people were, you know, occupied with athletics, social life, classes, cramming for exams; no, not at all, not at all.

SI: How much of a social world was there and how involved could you be in it, given your commuting?

MH: There was a lot of social life, I guess, especially at the fraternities. There were dances, which I didn't attend. I guess there was a senior ball or something, which I didn't attend. I was just a serious student, and did work on the farm and went to all the athletic events with my friends. So, I didn't have any social life there, ... no, not really.

SI: Was there a real split between the fraternity men and the non-fraternity men?

MH: Yes, yes. The fraternity men, I guess for them, [it] was like being in a family. They had someplace to go, and buddies and all that, and the non-fraternity men, I guess we hung around at the Commuter Club, or those of us who commuted from the area where I lived, we got together all the time and played touch football and baseball. So, we did get together.

SI: Were you ever involved in the Scarlet Barbarians? [Editor's Note: The Scarlet Barbarians was an "anti-Greek" social group.]

MH: No.

SI: There are some traditions from that era that have obviously fallen on the wayside, such as required religious services. Did you have to attend chapel?

MH: Mandatory, yes.

SI: What do you remember about chapel? Does anything stand out?

MH: Yes. Dean Fraser gave a sermon, or whatever. I don't remember anything special. It was routine. I don't remember anything special. [Editor's Note: Dean of Men Reverend Fraser Metzger served as acting chaplain at Rutgers from 1931 to 1944.]

SI: Did you feel like you were forced into it?

MH: No, no, just routine. It was okay, part of the activities.

SI: What about speakers that came onto campus? Do you remember seeing any speakers or hearing anyone?

MH: I remember singers, Nelson Eddy, [a popular singer/actor active from the late 1930s to the early 1960s]. I'm sure I went to the lecture series. I have no special memories about that.

SI: At this time, as a foreign language major, what did you think you were going to do with your career after you left Rutgers?

MH: Teach, teach.

SI: Did you always think you would teach at the college level?

MH: College level, yes. In answer to that question, I skip over the war, I came back to Rutgers, went to Professor Billetdoux, said I needed a job. He recommended me for a high school teaching job, I think in Elizabeth. For twenty-five years, every one of ... the students he recommended had gotten a job, one hundred percent. I didn't get the job, his first ever. He was thunderstruck. He said, "What did you say? What'd you tell these people?" "I said I was only going to stay two years." He said, "That's a mistake," because they were hiring high school teachers, you know, for a whole career, and I still remember what he said to me. ... He was an old-fashioned gentleman, "I would never counsel you to lie, but, on the other hand, it's not essential to tell the entire truth." He said, "If a lady asks, 'What do you think of my hat?' you would not say, 'Madam, your hat is a fright,'" and so, I learned being totally honest is no good. [laughter]

SI: Did you have any interaction with any of the administrators, like Dean Metzger or President Clothier?

MH: Dean [Walter] Marvin. I was in his philosophy class and we got to be very friendly. ... When I was going to go to graduate school, he recommended I go to Princeton and he got me accepted, but I was stupid. Instead, I went to Columbia. Princeton was only eleven miles away, but I commuted to Columbia, which was a terrible chore and expense, but he was a very fine gentleman and I knew him, I wouldn't say socially, but we talked all the time. [Editor's Note: Dr. Walter Marvin came to Rutgers in 1909 and is credited as the primary proponent of the early Psychology Department at the college, in which he taught several philosophy courses. He served as Dean of the Faculty beginning in 1921, then, as the first dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (as Rutgers College was known from 1924 to 1967) from 1924 to 1944.]

SI: From doing these interviews, I get the impression that the faculty in that era could be heavily involved in the lives of the students.

MH: Oh, yes, oh, yes. I used to play badminton with Professor [Clarence] Turner. He'd invite me and some other students to his home. We played badminton, and I would invite him to my home for dinner, got to be very friendly with him.

SI: You mentioned going to the concerts and the concert series. Were you involved in music in other ways?

MH: No. I took music appreciation and went to all the concerts.

SI: Was that with Dr. [Howard D.] McKinney?

MH: Yes, McKinney and [F. Austin] "Soup" Walter, yes. [Editor's Note: Professors McKinney and Walter were both faculty in the Music-Art Department of the College of Arts and Sciences in this era.]

SI: After you graduated from Rutgers, you went directly into graduate study.

MH: At Rutgers.

SI: At Rutgers?

MH: I did my master's at Rutgers.

SI: What was involved in getting a master's then?

MH: I took all the mandatory courses in French. In addition, I took a graduate course in Spanish and, maybe, also in German, much too big a load. ... It went along very smoothly, and then, I had my orals, which was a disaster, for the following reason. The former head of the Language Department, Professor Davis, had been retired, ... and he had protested. He wanted to continue to teach. One of the things he'd teach was medieval grammar, which I'd never had. He showed up at the orals with a big smirk. He started to interrogate me about medieval grammar. [laughter] I knew nothing about it. So, with a smirk, he left. So, they patted me on the back,

said, "Don't worry. Don't worry," because you don't want to fail during the orals, but the rest went okay, and so, I got a master's in languages.

SI: Did you have to write a thesis?

MH: Yes, I actually wrote an ... undergraduate thesis, a play, *Sophonisbe*, which the library has, and then, I wrote a master's thesis on the literary criticism of Michel de Montaigne [(1532-1592)]. ... I was to write the doctoral on that also, and so, it went okay. So, then, I should have gone to Princeton, but, instead, I was accepted at Columbia.

SI: What got you interested in that topic of study?

MH: Well, you had to have a thesis subject. Professor Turner interested me in Montaigne, and that's how I got interested in it.

SI: In 1940, you graduated with your master's, and then, you started studying at Columbia.

MH: Yes.

SI: Were you also working at the same time or were you a full-time student?

MH: A full-time student.

SI: What about the professors at Columbia? Who were you studying under? Do they stand out in your memory?

MH: Now, two years ago, when I got my doctorate, I complimented the dean who spoke to me and the head of the French Department, that they were human beings. [Editor's Note: Although Dr. Horlick completed the work for his PhD in the 1950s, Columbia University did not confer the PhD upon him until 2007.] ... I told them that, in my time, Columbia was a nineteenth-century institution. The professors were very, very impersonal. They didn't give a darn about you. They had canned lectures, and I cited, for an example, there was a nineteenth-century man, ... I think he was head of the French Department, his [name was] Horatio Smith, a nineteenth-century name. ... He would show up in class and give a cold lecture and leave, and, really, nobody had any personal interest whatsoever, whatsoever. My studies were interrupted by World War II. I went back after the war, ... summers, and then, they were still nineteenth-century-type professors. I completed everything. At that time, my wife came down with TB [tuberculosis] and had to go into a TB sanitarium in New York State. So, I had to, really, quit and I asked the professors to help me find a job. They were not the least bit interested, not the least bit interested. I eventually got a better job with the government, but, to back up, they were very cold lecturers. You never got to know any of your professors personally. It was like nothing. The only good professors we ever had was, they would import famous French scholars, and they took a personal interest, were really human.

SI: When you say "imported," were they refugees?

MH: No, no. They had visiting scholars from France, and, invariably, they were very nice and very personable, and personally interested. In fact, one of them gave me a hundred in a course.

SI: By this time, France had fallen to the Germans, correct?

MH: Yes, yes. So, one of the professors, unfortunately, I don't remember his name, would spit when ... he named Laval. Laval was the traitor, the French traitor, who became [Vichy] Prime Minister, Pierre Laval, and he would actually spit when he said the name. [laughter] ... There, some of them were extremely bitter about what happened to France, particularly this one man, but the others just ground away at their subject.

SI: Was there much awareness among the student body about what was happening? Was there any activism?

MH: No, no. Everybody was studying like mad. Yes, I had to pass a three-hour Latin exam, I never had Latin, four-hour German exam, and so, you would just study, study. You buried your nose in the library in those days.

SI: Was the prewar draft an issue for you at all, or did you get a deferment because you were in school?

MH: I got a deferment for one year, maybe, as a farmer, but none of that mattered; I got drafted.

SI: When did the war start to impact your life? Was it before Pearl Harbor?

MH: No, at Pearl Harbor. I was walking along on the farm one day, just doing chores, and a friend came running along [to] tell me about Pearl Harbor. So, we rushed to the radio to listen, and that was in December. ... Technically, farming was essential for the war. Farmers were not supposed to be drafted. Ruth's cousin, the one who introduced me to Ruth, his family was very shrewd. They bought a farm in his name and declared he was a farmer. So, he was never drafted. [laughter] We farm boys were all drafted. Yes, as my father predicted, as soon as I got married, I would change my status and I got drafted into the Army.

SI: Did you have any plans for when you would go into the military? Did you look at other services, like the Navy or the Army Air Forces?

MH: Oh, yes, I volunteered for the Air Force. My mother found the letter and tore it up, which ... I found out later, or, otherwise, I'd be in the Air Force. ...

SI: She ripped up your letter to them, or did she rip up a letter sent back to you?

MH: No, the letter never got to them. In those days, we had mailboxes out on the rural road, and my mother found the letter and tore it up. ... I found out about it too late, no. [laughter] So, I just got the draft letter, and the only plan I had after that was to make sure that Ruth and I would always be together somehow. ... We reported. Well, we had a physical at Newark, New

Jersey, routine physical, a couple hundred men walking around stark naked. Am I being too detailed?

SI: No, that is good.

MH: All right. ... There was a desk [where someone was] saying, "Have you ever had an allergy?" I said, "Yes, hay fever." The doc said, "Next." ... One of my best friends, who was so ... nearsighted, he could scarcely walk without his glasses, he flunked the exam. However, there were so many kids with VD [venereal disease] in Newark, they didn't ... fill their quota. So, they got him, but, anyway, ... I got on a troop train in Jamesburg and shipped off to Fort Dix. The first night was fantastically bad, raining, mud. We went to the theater there and we saw [a film starring] Betty Grable and Cesar Romero, beautiful scenery, beautiful women, beautiful weather. They turned off the movie and we were in a mud hole. [laughter] ... Then came the first Rutgers influence, in classification, and there was a man who had been in class with me, also a language major, and so, he said he'd take care of me.

SI: Do you remember his name?

MH: Livio Dalto, Livio Dalto. Then, we got the usual shots. I had had shots for hay fever as a kid, so, it didn't mean anything to me. So, we went through the door and, [on] each side, they gave a shot; fifty percent of the guys passed out. In those days, nobody knew shots. Next, we had the intelligence exam, and who knew IQ tests? There were no IQ tests, and so, the farm boys, you know, they did great, seventy-five, eighty-five, ninety. We thought a hundred was the maximum, and then, my mark came up and I was way, way over a hundred. ... Anyway, the next morning, everybody was put on a troop train and, bam, we were gone, nothing Livio Dalto could do. We were shipped to Camp Pickett, Virginia, in Southern Virginia, living in tents all year-round.

SI: Was that for infantry training?

MH: Medical replacement training, litter-bearers and things like that. So, we lived in tents and took courses.

SI: You mentioned earlier that your ROTC experience helped you.

MH: Yes.

SI: Did it help you at this point?

MH: In a way, in a way. Here's where the Rutgers influence came in. ... I was the only college graduate in my company. So, one morning, the Sergeant wakes me up around five-thirty in the morning and he says to me, "Horlick, what the heck are you doing here?" and I said, "Where am I supposed to be?" He said, "You volunteered for insect control school." I said, "What's that?" He says, "I don't know. You'll soon find out," and it was how to get rid of insects. This is before DDT, how to get rid of insects. So, as a graduation present, we were given a can of chemical [insecticide]. ... I'd managed to get to see Ruth every night, and enlisted men weren't supposed

to do that. So, the sergeants had it in for me. So, one day, I showed up for reveille two minutes late and I was put on company punishment, KP [mess hall cleaning and preparation duty]. The good part about it, I became a buddy of the mess sergeant and, whenever he had an especially good meal, he would invite Ruth into camp. [laughter] So, when I graduated from insect control school, I was supposed to put this insecticide all around the mess hall. The next morning, there were a thousand dead cockroaches. He [the mess sergeant] came after me with a cleaver. He wanted to kill me. So, that was the end of that friendship. Shortly thereafter, I'm asleep, at five-thirty in the morning, he [the Sergeant] shakes me, "Horlick, what the hell are you doing here?" "Where am I supposed to be?" "You volunteered for typing school." ... So, I graduated [at] twenty words a minute. Another time, we're marching along and we're saying, "Where are we going, Sergeant?" He says, "Oh, you volunteered to give blood." [laughter] ...

SI: How were you able to get out of camp to see your wife?

MH: By a miracle. It's very complicated. By a miracle, my father sold his egg route ... in Brooklyn to new neighbors, and the new neighbor's brother was an officer in my very own company, in Southern Virginia, and so, he got me a pass. So, the sergeants were out [ranked]. Well, the only thing I'll say about the training is, we had fifteen-mile forced marches. You were not allowed to drink water. Fifty percent of the men passed out and you were not allowed to help them. ... We had a periodic written exam, the same one, the very same one. My fellow cadre men were stevedores, manual laborers, big, husky guys, and I started to get a hundred every time and they called me "The Brain," the same exam. [laughter] One time, I was on Corporal of the Guard, [a temporary position of the interior security detachment responsible for supervising and instructing a single shift of the guard]. It was about eleven o'clock at night. I went to the battalion headquarters to look through the battalion commander's files, as I was supposed to do, and there were shipping orders for me, to ship out, twelve-thirty. They hadn't told me about it. If I failed to show up, they would have sent me to New Guinea; that was the ultimate [punishment]. I called Ruth and I said, "You have an hour-and-a-half." ... All the soldiers' wives had one room in somebody's house. I said, "Be at the railroad station, twelve-thirty, with everything." [laughter] I got one of my buddies to take over. I ran like the dickens, threw everything into a barracks bag. I don't know how I got into town and, twelve-thirty, we were on the train. If I hadn't made it, I could have been ... court-martialed or something.

SI: That was headed to Camp Ritchie.

MH: No, no, not yet. It was to VPI, [Virginia Polytechnic Institute], Virginia Tech, and Ruth was the only girl on the troop train. [laughter] The problem at Virginia Tech was, we didn't know anything about the town. She had to find a room and I had to go along with the troops. So, we agreed to meet at the town square, next day; turned out there were two town squares, but everything was just perfect. It was called a "repple-depple," replacement depot. Troops were moving in and moving out. They couldn't keep track of us. So, after reveille, I sneaked off with Ruth and another couple into the mountains and we goofed off and I'd come back for retreat. ... She lived in an apartment with the wife of the professor of biology. So, I sneaked out every night.

SI: One of the things I also hear in these interviews is how difficult it was for dependents to find housing, get setup and travel around to these camps.

MH: Yes. No, in each place, she managed to find a room. ... I don't know, she just managed, asked around and found a room, and each room was [taken by] an Army wife. Sometimes, there were three rooms, three Army wives, and it worked out okay.

SI: How did you adjust to the change in your life, transitioning from the freedoms of civilian life to a disciplined military life?

MH: Duck soup. I must say, others did not. I remember, back at Camp Pickett, in these miserable tents, [laughter] there was a guy crying, crying, from a sheltered home, and everybody thought it was awful. You just accept it. Everybody just accepted it and, if you went along with the system, you were okay. I had no trouble, especially with Ruth in town, ... right nearby; so, no trouble.

SI: How did the men in these units get along? Were they from all over the country or different backgrounds? How did they get along?

MH: They had to get along. They got along okay. Our automobile mechanic, from Deans, New Jersey, a very good mechanic, was sent to cooks and bakers school. ... No, there was a special unit at Camp Pickett called STU, Special Training Unit, illiterate guys from the Appalachia [region]. Everybody made fun with them, but, no, people got along fine, no problem.

SI: Was this your first time in the South?

MH: Yes, yes, we discovered Southern food, Southern customs. In those days, it was quite charming. Every town had different food. The people were very polite. They'd stop you on the street and say, "Hello," and the food was very different. We weren't accustomed to it.

SI: Was there any of the North-South problem, in your experience?

MH: No, no. The Northern guys joshed the Southern guys, who had Southern accents. No, everybody got along very well. The cadre men all had seen too many movies and they treated us like, you know, in a very bad way. They thought that was necessary. No, the human relationships were just fine.

SI: You were at this "repple-depple" at Virginia Tech.

MH: Yes.

SI: What happened there?

MH: We had courses there. We had to take courses, mostly in world geography and world history. ... Ruth and I would have dinner in the faculty dining room, and beautiful scenery, everything was lovely. So, I sneaked out, I was never caught, and, one morning, about five in

the morning, the telephone rang. "You're shipping out at seven o'clock. [laughter] Get the hell down here." So, Ruth packed everything, I ran like the dickens to the dorm at VPI, and we were down at the train. They had asked people, "Where do you want to be sent?" and I said, "California." So, we got on the train, again, the troops and one girl, Ruth, and we didn't know where we were going. We wound up in Philadelphia, at Haverford College, to study Italian. ... In Haverford College, we had classes, intense classes in language, Italian language and area, and we had a very, very memorable instructor. His name was Aldo Caselli. He was not a teacher. He was an economist. He didn't know how to teach, so, he just talked, just talked, and we became fluent in Italian.

SI: Was it similar to the total immersion approach?

MH: Yes, exactly, talked Italian all the time, and Ruth got a room with the wife of the professor of music, on campus, ... in exchange for babysitting, and, again, I sneaked out every night. [laughter]

SI: Did you know, at this point, what your training was leading up to? Did they say that you were going to be assigned to Military Intelligence?

MH: No, no, we were going to go to Italy, ... Italian area language. We were going to go to Italy and stay on, during the war and after the war, as Military Government. We knew that; let me think.

SI: Was it easy for you to pick up Italian?

MH: Oh, yes, oh, yes. I already knew Spanish, French and some Latin, so, it was very easy. Throughout my Army career, there are always mysterious doors. So, one day, at Haverford, it didn't mean anything to me at the time, I was told to go into Room 123. I go into 123 and there's some characters there, sitting, and they talked to me in German and talked to me in French; never saw them again, didn't know who they were. They were from [Camp] Ritchie, which I'd never heard of, but, anyway, at Haverford, I guess I majored in sneaking off. During formations, we'd march by the library and there was shrubbery. I would disappear in the shrubbery. Ruth sat in the library. She'd open the window, I'd go into their window, and nobody ever betrayed me, but I did very well in Italian. Finally, we got, like, a short pass. We went to Lake Placid, was an eighteen-hour bus trip, [laughter] learned how to ski. Then, we went home to my parents' in New Jersey and we got a telegram, "Take an eight-day furlough." Nobody got an eight-day furlough, nobody. So, we rushed to Haverford to see what was wrong and, at the railroad station, we met the First Sergeant and he said, "What the hell are you doing here?" I said, "What's wrong?" He says, "The whole Army Specialized Training Program is gone, gone." [Editor's Note: The Army Specialized Training Program allowed enlisted men who were high school graduates with high IQ scores to attend universities in order to produce officers in such specialties as engineering, medicine and languages.] ... I said, "Where am I going?" He says, "Camp Ritchie." I said, "What's Ritchie?" He said, "The only thing I know about it is, they drop people behind enemy lines," which is not true. Everybody else, except I, was shipped to Brooklyn, New York, to be in charge of Italian prisoners of war loading ships, and I went to Ritchie. Who knew what Ritchie was? It was top secret. So, we took a train to this town of

Blue Ridge Summit, [Pennsylvania]. Ruth went off to find a room and I reported to camp. By the way, a lady from California came and interviewed me only on my experience at Ritchie. So, ... I reported for duty and it was the Military Intelligence Service, MIS. In charge of the new troops was "Man Mountain Dean". I don't know if you ever heard of him. He was the first [professional wrestler]. In real life, his name was Sergeant [Frank] Leavitt. Back in the 1930s, he invented fake wrestling. I don't know if you've ever seen, on television, these wrestlers; he was the first one, make-believe wrestling. He was such an enormous man that Ruth once saw him try to get into a telephone booth and he couldn't. He was enormous, and, here, he had troops, all language specialists, and nothing to do with them, nothing. What are you going to do with them? We had to wait for a class [to begin], up to a month, and so, he had us picking up cigarettes. That's what we did, and Ruth would come to the edge of camp, walk on the outside of the fence, and I walked on the inside of the fence. ... We'd spend the morning that way, and then, he had nothing for us to do, so, it was up to us to disappear. ... So, Ruth would come into camp and we'd disappear into the PX [post exchange or store], and this went on for an entire month. [laughter] ...

SI: I am surprised you were able to keep sneaking your wife on base at Camp Ritchie.

MH: It was okay, and I must say, I figured a way to sneak out every night, but sneaking in was more difficult. So, another soldier and I found a hole under the gate and we'd sneak through, sneak back into camp, every night, and nobody ever betrayed me. My bunkmate was called Cholly Knickerbocker. He was the most famous gossip columnist in America at that time. Anyway, we started class, German language, IPW, "Interrogation of Prisoners of War," and we had very intensive classes, "Organization of the Army," "Photo Interpretation," [where] we had to read aerial photographs of military targets. ... We had to be approved on all kinds of weapons and structure of the German, Russian, Italian, British armies. We had to memorize all this, and then, we had special problems. For example, they would drop us off at night, in the woods, twenty miles from camp. You had a map, which had no writing on it, and you had several hours, three hours, to find your ... place on the map and find the trucks. Otherwise, you had to walk to camp, twenty miles, and it was blackout conditions, no lights. So, under a GI raincoat, we'd shine on the map, locate ourselves and did this. My group always did okay. Another problem was, we would go cross-country and they would have American Indians, Native Americans, hiding in the bushes. If we didn't obey the rules, they would shoot us--fortunately, no bullets--and we'd be declared a failure. One night, one of the guys stepped on a skunk. [laughter] He had to be carted back to camp in a separate truck. There was a three-day problem. We walked day and night for three days, stopping only to eat and take tests. There was an eight-day problem. We lived in the woods in make-believe battle conditions. ...

SI: Were these field exercises meant to simulate missions that you might be assigned to in the theater of operations?

MH: Practicing, yes, practicing, as though it were during the war, practicing, and other things.
...

SI: More specifically, what did they teach you about interrogating prisoners of war? What were the techniques they taught you and what were the limits?

MH: Very good question. Soldiers wear shoulder patches and the Germans had such patches, for example, "15th Artillery Regiment". So, just by looking at the guy, you already knew a lot about him, which the prisoner didn't realize. You started talking to him, ... about his regiment and all that, and you already knew, by heart, the structure of it. ... He was astounded that you knew so much and he thought you knew more than you did know. ... He would talk, he would talk. Also, they carried, sort of, I forget the name of their booklets, ... with their history, [a *soldbuch*]. So, you knew all about them and they were overwhelmed and amazed, and so, you would interrogate, "Where is your unit?" and, "How are the machine-guns doing?" and all that. ... They would definitely talk, and so, you could get from them anything, anything. I'll tell you what happened in actual battle conditions, but we were trained in that, knowing the structure of it.

SI: The order of battle?

MH: The order of battle, that is, the structure of combat forces, yes. ... So, it was very successful. It was very, very successful.

SI: Was most of this training done through role playing or did they ever expose you to actual prisoners during your training?

MH: Role playing.

SI: Okay, role playing.

MH: Yes, and, also, well, anyway, we learned, supposedly by heart, almost, every place in Germany, and also in France and, yes, yes, especially German weapons, what the German weapons were. ... Anyway, we graduated and a whole bunch of people immediately were sent overseas, but I wasn't. They kept me another month, and they had nothing for me to do. So, I policed the area. Then, I started school all over again in French, MII, "Military Intelligence Interpretation," or something, in French, and went through the whole thing from the French point of view, and then, another period of delay where they had nothing for us to do and we had to goof off. The training was very, very intensive. We had to memorize huge amounts of stuff. Now, they have instruments for reading map interpretation, photo interpretation, aerial photographs. For example, the Germans would have a box with a big log sticking out and it looked like a tank. ... We would waste bombs on that and all that, and we learned identification of aircraft, also, to see them. So, then, all of a sudden, we were going to be shipped out from Ritchie, and all the shipments before had gone to Camp Kilmer, just north of New Brunswick, all of them. ... So, I gave Ruth all my dirty clothes and everything, said, "So long," we never said good-bye, "See you in Kilmer." We loaded on a train and it went through Philadelphia, through Trenton, didn't stop in New Brunswick, [laughter] went up to Camp Shanks, New York, and, from there, we shipped overseas in a Liberty ship, a World War II Liberty ship.

SI: Were you part of a unit at this time or were you basically a replacement?

MH: No, no, the intelligence structure was five-man intelligence teams and I was on a five-man intelligence team. So, we shipped overseas. ...

SI: What was the voyage like?

MH: It was smooth as glass, smooth as glass. It was *via* the South Atlantic, believe it or not, like this, to avoid the German submarines. ... The bunks were six above. One guy pretended he was *non compos mentis* [not of a sound mind] and he refused to get out of his bunk, refused to eat, thinking he'd be exempt. The mess hall smelled terrible and a lot of people got seasick; I didn't. We landed in England and, at night, went to a place called Pheasy Farms, near Birmingham, Lichfield. This is unheated, abandoned, like, co-op houses, unheated. We slept on straw pallets and we didn't know how long we'd be there or where we would go or anything like that. So, one thing, I got a pass to visit friends of Ruth's mother in London, and they were living under tough conditions, with all the bombing, and I got to respect the British very much. This lady, Mrs. Simon, told me a story. She said, one day, the Home Guard came into their house and forced them to leave their own home, because a huge bomb had fallen in their street and hadn't exploded. She was very indignant and they were forced [to leave] as is. She came back in the morning, disregarding the bomb, to get their stuff. I thought that was very brave, and she saved enough coupons to give me a hot shower in an unheated room. [laughter] ... You've got to admire the British very much.

SI: Did you see a lot of devastation in the areas where you were?

MH: Yes. We got a pass to Birmingham. It was total devastation, and I stayed overnight at the Red Cross Club in England, in London, when I visited. ... A couple of nights later, it was bombed; yes, very, very devastated.

SI: Were there any raids while you were there on a pass, or in Birmingham?

MH: Well, no, not in Birmingham; maybe. We were about ten miles away. So, then came word that we were shipping to Europe. That was expected.

SI: Can you give me a rough time period of when this was in 1944?

MH: I think it was October 1944, December, November, somewhere along there, long after D-Day. ... Oh, one episode; we had jeeps. We were intelligence teams, we had jeeps. It symbolizes the fact that everything went wrong--the minutiae, all the little things went wrong--during the war, but we won. We went to Cardiff, Wales, to pick up our jeeps. We had something like forty-eight jeeps. We left Cardiff, Wales. We took a pee break at a big stone wall, drove four hours, came back to the same place. Our officers were not Intelligence; they were antiaircraft officers. The Army produced too many antiaircraft officers. They didn't know what to do with them. They assigned them into Military Intelligence. So, we wandered all over Southern England. We were lost. They took away all the road signs, in case of an invasion. To make a long story short, it took two days to get to Birmingham. It was basically a ten-hour trip. So, anyway, in Southern England, we got on an LST, landing ship, tank. The Channel crossing was supposed to be nine hours. We bobbed up and down for several days while they tried to fix

the motors on the thing. They finally took us off the LST and put us on another one. There was a storm. We bobbed up and down several more days. It had mechanical trouble. To make a long story short, ... it took us, I think, ... nine days to cross the Channel.

SI: Wow.

MH: When we approached France, the ship alongside of us struck a mine and started to go down very, very rapidly. We hit the coast of France. The LST has a gate for loading tanks. ... They lowered the gate about six or eight feet from the shore. The first vehicle was a jeep and they said, "Go," and the man said, "I can't drive across water." So, they cursed him out and said, "Go," and he drove in and disappeared. So, they backed up the LST and rammed ashore and we came ashore.

SI: Did the man make it out?

MH: I don't know, probably not. [laughter] They were worried about the Germans and about the [E-boats or *Schnellboot*]. There are German torpedo boats around. We came on shore, Military Intelligence. So, we came on shore and I was interpreting among the locals where to go. We finally camped. It was evening. We had jeeps, we had guns, we had maps, we had binoculars, no food; can't think of everything, no food. So, the commanding officer went over to another GI unit and mooched food. Included was a twenty-pound bag of coffee, paper bag. The volunteer for KP dropped it and it burst and spread over a whole area. So, we scraped it together and covered it with a GI raincoat. In the morning, we located a GI can, a garbage can, filled it with water, boiled, threw in the coffee, skimmed off the branches. Everybody swore it was the best coffee they ever had.

SI: How large was this unit that was moving along?

MH: Let's see, I think there were forty-eight men, forty-eight. So, then, Paris had just been liberated. We were top secret. As we approached Paris, there were black signs saying, "MIS Headquarters," [laughter] believe it or not. So, we followed the MIS Headquarters [signs] to a place called Le Vesinet, Paris, and we were in unheated buildings. It was wintertime by now. It was unheated.

SI: When you got to the United Kingdom and in these incidents off the French coast, how did you react to the devastation and early signs of war?

MH: Oh, yes. ... Well, you just accepted it, you just accepted it. ... We did once go to a service club in Birmingham and you walked around in total ruins. Everything was just ruined, devastation. You just wondered how the people had survived.

SI: Before arriving at the headquarters in Paris, what was your daily routine like?

MH: ... Like, in England?

SI: Yes.

MH: There was literally nothing for us to do, nothing for us to do, trying to keep warm. The British have fireplaces that don't work and, I don't know, just goofing off. There was nothing to do.

SI: Were you already part of a five-man group?

MH: Yes.

SI: Could you tell me a little bit about the rest of the group?

MH: Yes. That's part of the next story.

SI: Sure.

MH: Yes, the five-man group. [When] you asked, "What did we do in [the] Birmingham area?" I suddenly began to remember. There was literally nothing to do. So, a buddy of mine and I got a job, even though we were sergeants, with a lot of stripes, cleaning up the post library, which meant we would be able to stay in the library, do a lot of reading, and then, after hours, clean up the place. ... Then, the guards and we got fed at midnight. It was sort of goofing off. There was really nothing to do. I hate to jump seventy years, but our grandson was a lieutenant in the Air Force in Idaho, just a kid, and there was nothing to do, nothing to do. So, he resigned. We tried to tell him that, between battles, or military action, there's nothing to do in the military. Yes, so, he quit, unfortunately, but, anyway, in Le Vesinet, outside of Paris, again, there was nothing to do. We went to the nearest *bistro* and they served us wine, and we were thinking, "These are the same people who were serving Germans recently. [laughter] They were serving Germans." That felt very funny. We did buy baguettes, you know baguettes, great, big, long French breads. That's all there was to buy, and they were so delicious. ... I did sort of get on the courier truck, which drove through Paris--I was nominally in charge of it--to get mail, and we drove around Paris, which was very exciting. Paris was not bombed at all.

SI: Coming from a farm family in South Brunswick, it must have been quite an experience to suddenly be in Paris.

MH: Yes, yes, extremely so. Let's see, what happened in Paris? three or four little things. Number one, one of my buddies was Dutch. His name was Kutzer. Kutzer, he was just one of the guys. One day, he was missing, missing and AWOL [away without leave], very serious. ... Then, the MPs reported he'd been arrested in a house of ill repute in Paris, and would the commanding officer personally get him? The commanding officer did. Believe it or not, several days later, [laughter] he was again missing and they arrested him, again, in a house of ill repute in Paris, but I went into Paris, I think, to the opera. I didn't know the place was off-limits and, on the way back, I took the railroad to Le Vesinet. ... Several hours later, the train was bombed. [laughter] There were all kinds of little things like that, ... just good luck. At Le Vesinet, you were mentioning these five-men teams and I told you there were always mysterious doors, so many times. So, one day, I was told to go to Room So-and-So. I went to Room So-and-So and there were two majors there, very unusual, two majors, and they talked to me in German for

about half an hour, asking my life story. I didn't know who they were or what they wanted. The next morning, at five in the morning, I was ordered to get on a truck and we drove to the Battle of the Bulge. [Editor's Note: The Germans launched the Ardennes Offensive, later known as the Battle of the Bulge, on December 16, 1944.] What I did not know was, the people at Ritchie, I would say ninety-five to ninety-eight percent were foreign-born. They spoke their languages natively, Russian or French, Polish or German, natively. They were natives, but it turned out there had to be military reports written and these guys, mostly, their English wasn't good enough to do these reports. So, they desperately needed a native American, [laughter] and they found me. I don't know how they found me. So, in a way, ... [it] saved my life, because, when one of these intelligence teams were caught, the Germans simply shot them, yes. So, we drove through terrible weather, didn't know where, in an open-backed truck, to the Battle of the Bulge.

SI: Just you or all five men?

MH: No, the rest were gone.

SI: The rest were gone.

MH: Gone, just me. I didn't have any say so [or] know where I was going, but that's the way it went.

SI: How long did it take you to get to where you eventually wound up?

MH: I don't know. We drove in the truck, oh, a day and a night, I think.

SI: Okay.

MH: Yes, came to this unit in a place called Jambes, Belgium, near the town of Namur. ... There was the unit. It was, I would say, maybe forty-eight men, guards and interrogators, a commanding officer and all that sort of thing, top secret. The good part was, I didn't go with the team to battle. The bad part was, the Bulge was coming right toward us, right toward us. ... The Germans were bombing the bridges. So, at night, we would seek shelter in a tunnel, railroad tunnel, under a big mountain called the Citadel, *Citadelle*, and ... right near us was a huge factory. ... It started with a few prisoners and, ... when the Bulge collapsed, there were forty thousand German prisoners and they were interrogated. ... The commanding officer was, again, an Air Force officer, but a nice guy. All the officers were mostly Air Force officers who didn't know what the hell was going on. So, notable then was this; a corporal, interrogating a German prisoner, found out there was a major German ammunition depot. The Air Force bombed it and destroyed it and everybody got a promotion. [laughter] The corporal got a third strike, stripe. ...

SI: Were the enlisted men in these units given a lot of autonomy, since they knew more about the job than the officers did?

MH: Yes, yes, and so, I got to write the reports, and a funny sidelight was, a roommate of Ruth's, way, way back at Camp Ritchie, her husband was made lieutenant. That's the highest

you could get, second lieutenant, because he was so good. He couldn't write English, and so, he used to sneak his reports to me and I'd help him write them. [laughter]

SI: Were you a part of a five-man team or were you helping multiple teams with reports?

MH: No, there were no teams anymore.

SI: Okay, no teams.

MH: No teams, there was just a unit.

SI: What was the name of the unit?

MH: It was Mobile Field Interrogation Unit Number 1, MFIU No. 1, and we had guards, interrogators and a few, what really became editors, and we were producing these reports, which went directly to the Pentagon. We were not attached to any local unit. So, we had autonomy. That was the good part. The bad part about it was, the Germans were coming right at us and we couldn't move without Pentagon approval. [laughter] So, that was sort of sticky, that was sort of sticky. So, we stayed there awhile, interrogating, and there were various other secret activities going on.

SI: Would you be witness to the interrogations or would they just give you the information afterwards to write a report?

MH: Well, I did some of the interrogations, and then, I got the reports.

SI: What were those interrogations like, that you can recall?

MH: Well, ... like I told you, they would talk to the Germans, or we'd talk to the Germans, and they were sort of very cocky at first, and got to be less and less cocky, because, after all, we'd come all that way [laughter] and they'd retreated all that way. I don't know what happened to the SS. We didn't get to interrogate any SS. Other people in these five-man teams, I guess, sometimes, they simply shot the SS, simply shot them. So, we stayed there. Overhead, at night, a thousand British planes would go by. In the daytime, a thousand American planes would go by. In the surrounding hills were American and British antiaircraft [artillery]. Sometimes, they got nervous and shot down their own planes. ... The planes went by in groups, little pods of three. Coming back, there'd be so many missing, so many missing. It was very bad. Over our heads came the V-1s, you know about the V-1s, these rockets, and they had motors that sounded like motorcycles, second-hand motorcycles, and they packed a huge punch. [Editor's Note: The Germans began launching V-1 Flying Bombs against the United Kingdom shortly after the D-Day landings. After the Allied advanced had pushed the V-1's operational range back from British shores, the Germans began attacking targets in Belgium heavily.] They went on to London and they were so frequent. They had very poor motors. A lot of them fell down in the Eifel Mountains. The Germans referred to them as the *eifelschrek*, this means, "The Eifel Fright," and we'd be walking along; suddenly, the motor stopped and we'd fall to the ground. [laughter] This Citadel had a lot of iron in it, that mountain, and would wreck their navigation

and they'd fall down. Fortunately, none of them fell on us, but they made a tremendous, tremendous explosion. ... I guess for recreation, we went into Namur. The bridges were all blown, so, we'd cross over a weir, ... it was a plank only about eighteen inches wide, and into the town. We saw a Nelson Eddy movie. [Editor's Note: Nelson Eddy was a popular actor of the 1930s and 1940s who starred in twenty-two musicals.] Again, the town was totally destroyed, and to come out of the movie with Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy was frightful, ... but, finally, let's see, a couple things happened. Number one, there came an order from the commanding general, I memorized it, "There's no mud in nature. ... Mud is manmade. There will be no mud in my command." There was nothing but mud. The commanding general came on an inspection. We were very excited. We had a situation map of every German unit, every German unit ahead of us, and we cleaned up the place. The commanding general came riding up in his jeep. He said to our commanding officer, "What are your general orders, sir?" The commanding officer said, "I've forgotten them, sir." The General reamed him out and drove off. Nothing went right, but we won.

SI: Was this the general commanding officer of the army or a division?

MH: The area.

SI: The area.

MH: Yes, the area. So, eventually, we got orders to move. The Bulge had collapsed. We got orders to move. Two things; Military Intelligence had reported to the Pentagon, and individual teams had reported, that the Germans are going to attack. The Germans had brought divisions from Italy and from Russia into Western Germany. Military intelligence teaches, when you mass troops, you're going to attack. The Pentagon didn't believe it. The Battle of the Bulge was avoidable, avoidable. I've since wondered whether Eisenhower, who was very smart, knew that it was coming, was willing to sacrifice troops, knew that the Bulge would be pinched off and that would be the end of Germany. The troops that were sacrificed were Army Specialized Training [Program], ASTP troops. We were ordered to move. Stacked all over the cottages where we were were top secret documents, a yard high. You can't burn paper; only the top sheet burns. We couldn't burn the damn thing. The top sheets would float over and float away. So, we dug holes, and the Belgian farmers came around protesting loudly. We buried the top secret documents and took off. [laughter] This is the funny side of the war. In front of us was the massacre, the Malmedy Massacre. German troops captured American forces, and [they were] SS, and murdered them. [Editor's Note: Soldiers of the First *Panzer* SS Division summarily executed eighty-four American prisoners of war on December 17, 1944, near the Belgian village of Malmedy.] I'm getting far afield.

SI: No, this is good.

MH: Okay. Recently, a cousin's father-in-law, from Texas, we met him here in Washington and he said he was also in a different branch of Military Intelligence, but he was interrogating American prisoners. ... He was the one who interrogated the two survivors and found out about the Malmedy Massacre, yes, but, anyway, we got into our jeeps and drove into Germany. The guys looted, I hate to use the word, a typing school, and so, each one had his own typewriter. As we drove into Germany, we passed German airfields full of jet planes, far, far better than ours,

but they couldn't use them, because the Air Force had bombed every bridge, every railroad. It would have been fearful if the Germans had been able to use these planes.

SI: Did your unit capture equipment and send it back to the US?

MH: We were trained in that, but we didn't. Other people had to do it.

SI: Okay.

MH: Other people had to do it. So, we drove to, I guess, Wiesbaden, [the] German city of Wiesbaden, where we were actually billeted in half a house. The other half had been bombed, [laughter] and we were billeted in the good half, and then, we were peeled off, peeled off from the rest of the unit. ... A couple of us were assigned to a counterintelligence unit and we drove to Central Germany and there was a; I can't call it a concentration camp. It was a place where ... the American troops had taken prisoners of suspicious German civilians, and we had to find out who they were, were they okay, and let them go. There were dead people all over the place. Anyway, we interrogated these people and, if they seemed innocent, we said, "Okay, let them go." I still remember one man. He'd been in the Warsaw Ghetto and had survived and, somehow, gotten to West Germany and they arrested him. So, I got him free right away. The next day, he was rearrested. The only way to make a living was black market, and they got him for black market. ... We interrogated these prisoners. There was one big, husky guy, seemed to have a clean record. The commanding officer said, "Don't let him go. He's obviously a Nazi," and we sort of helped clean up that camp.

SI: Was the war still going on when you were doing this?

MH: Yes, yes. It was ahead of us. ...

SI: Had you been trained in counterintelligence work at Ritchie?

MH: Yes, yes. To skip back to Ritchie, one day, in the middle of the counterintelligence class, suddenly, two men, or some men, burst into the room, grabbed the instructor and dragged him out. We're sitting there and somebody came and said, "Write down what you saw." [laughter] There was no unanimity about how many men did it. We disagreed over what happened. It was amazing, but, anyway, the next thing is, ... we drove to a place called Brunswick, Braunschweig, where the German Foreign Office had ... taken refuge, to interrogate officials there. ... I remember one high official I was talking to told me that in the nearby castle were all the Foreign Service records. ... I told the commanding officer. This was very precious stuff, and the reason why the German officials were so helpful was, the Russians were coming and they were deadly afraid of the Russians. Back in Namur, Jambes, we had somebody in Russian uniform. He was referred to as "The Commissar" and he was Russian. When he interrogated, the Germans spilled everything. [laughter] They were deadly afraid of the Russians. So, here we were, with the German Foreign Office records, a high official willing to cooperate, and, suddenly, word came the war was over. So, we got into our jeeps. I told the commanding officer, "What about these valuable records?" "To hell with them," and we drove back, all the way back, to west of the Rhine River, a place called Bad Rheinbach, where there was a ... prison camp containing the

highest level Nazis who were going to go to Munich, and we were to interrogate them. Coincidentally, by this time, it was spring. We enjoyed local fruit. Somebody captured a barrel of beer. Everybody came down with dysentery. ... You couldn't do anything. Once a week, a doctor visited. I got sick the day after he visited. In the camp was a German Nazi doctor who used to experiment on human beings. He was the only doctor. My buddy said I was crazy to have him diagnose. I took him out of his cell; he diagnosed. I took the medicine from the prisoner. It was okay. I was okay. So, we interrogated these criminals. ...

SI: Did anyone that you interrogated say something that stood out?

MH: Well, for example, I interrogated somebody who was a *gauleiter*, like a governor of a state, and, oh, he didn't know anything about concentration camps, "Concentration camps, oh, no, oh, no." He didn't know anything about anything. He was just an out-and-out liar. You know, some confessed to knowing something, but they were going to go on to the war trials, where they're going to be interrogated in more detail. ... Then, I went on from there to the ... European Intelligence Center, outside of Frankfurt, where Ruth grew up. ... We did more interrogation, more reporting, but, for me, personally, since Ruth grew up in Frankfurt, I went into Frankfurt as often as I could. ... I had an unusual opportunity to see what the Germans were really like. You weren't allowed to talk to the Germans. It was a non-fraternization [period], but I did. Ruth's family owned paintings from the leading painter in Frankfurt, and he wasn't Jewish, but he was in a concentration camp, and I went looking for him. ... It took me all over Frankfurt, and I got to talk to people and concluded that they weren't sorry about Hitler. They were only sorry they lost. ... For example, they were telling me about running during this terror bombing, and I would tell them, "Who started this anyway?" Eventually, I found him. He headed home from the concentration camp. So, in our intelligence camp, the European Intelligence Center, again, we had high-level criminals and people like that, and a funny thing happened. I was very friendly with the guards, who were native Americans, like me. The Sergeant of the Guard was caught having sexual intercourse with a female prisoner and he was busted. One of my roommates was the man who sort of caught him. One night, the door burst open and there were drunken guards with drawn pistols and they were after this sergeant. So, the Sergeant pulled out his pistol, and there I was, in-between them. [laughter] So, I soothed the guards, I told them, "He was ordered to do it," and it meant a lot. "He was ordered," and I soothed them. ... They knew me as "Tech Sergeant Red," I had red hair in those days, and they finally left. It was a touchy situation.

SI: At what point did you learn what had happened in the camps?

MH: I don't know. ... Somebody in the intelligence center married a Jewish woman. This is very strange, and she'd come from one of the camps. ... We talked to her, and another guy adopted a boy who had been in the camps. We found the details from them. I didn't get to them personally. So, these were some of the things that happened. Another one of these mysterious doors, we were all lined up, didn't know what was on the other side. It was a psychiatrist. He said to me, "Are you happy?" "No." "Why not?" "I have a wife and child back home." He said, "Thank you." One of the guards went in there and was there three-quarters of an hour and, when he came out, we asked him, "What happened?" and he told the following story. Before the invasion of England [France], he was in charge of the officers' laundry. It was a very tense time.

An officer came in to get his laundry and he paid. The British money was, you know, pounds, sovereigns, florins, ha'penny. ... The bill was like three sovereigns, two florins, a ha'penny threepence; he couldn't handle it. He just took the money, threw it up in the air and shouted, "Screw it." He said the officer turned pale and ran out, in came some guards, who put a straight jacket on him, and he kept fighting these guys, he kept fighting. They thought he was nuts. ... Finally, they put him in the psycho ward and he finally revealed what happened. ... Anyway, eventually, Ruth had had a child while I was overseas and this gave me enough points to ship home. Shipping home meant sailing from Antwerp, Belgium. The ship had been at sea during Thanksgiving. This is in December 1945; the ship had been at sea. ... It had Thanksgiving dinner. So, we were served a magnificent meal. In the middle of the meal, we came around the bottom of England. ... People got seasick. Only six of us were left to enjoy the meal, and we shipped home through the Signal Corps and the camp in New Jersey; I forgot the name.

SI: Monmouth?

MH: Monmouth, and then, I was mustered out of the service.

SI: From your time in Europe, what stood out as your most vivid memory? What stands out in your memory the most?

MH: Close calls, I had many, I had many, the train in Paris, the bombing of the Red Cross club. One time, we were walking along in Paris and a roof collapsed, and it fell about a yard away. One yard over and I would have been cut in half. ... I don't know, among my most vivid memories, and the most important thing I forgot to tell you, in Wiesbaden, there was a house of captured German generals. We asked them, "Why did we win the war?" and they said, "American equipment," not the brave troops, not the Air Force, endless American equipment. ... Their tanks were superior to ours, "eighty-eights." [Editor's Note: The eighty-eight-millimeter FlaK family of German artillery, although designed for antiaircraft, were utilized as an antitank and antipersonnel weapons.] They would destroy an American tank battalion; another would come and another would come, endless, endless equipment, and that was the main factor, they said. ... Another vivid memory was Ruth's hometown of Frankfurt. The whole town was wiped out. I went to her house and her school, which were totally destroyed, and a buddy of mine shipped home a brick from her house, totally destroyed. Now, we've been back to Europe many times and the city has no sign of war, none at all, totally restored. ... The attitude of the Germans, a final story about this; Ruth and I were in a town called Rothenburg ob der Tauber, a medieval town in the middle of Germany, strictly medieval. We couldn't get ourselves to talk to the people. So, we met a Belgian couple and we're talking about it and I developed a theory, that the Germans are like the biblical story of the locusts. In East Africa, there are grasshoppers, minding their own business. About every fifty years or so, since biblical times, they'd die and up come locusts, which devastate everything for miles and miles, and that's the story of the Germans. They're delightful, they're peace-loving, they're fun, they have good beer; 1870, war, and then, they're nice; 1918, or 1914, war, and then, they're nice, and World War II. ... If you go back in history, they're descendants of the Huns and the Teutons. They had the Hundred Years War. ... In their genes is war. That was my most vivid impression; delightful people, but ... they're like the locusts.

SI: At any point, did you think that you might be sent to the Pacific Theater?

MH: Yes. At the end of V-E Day, which was in May, [May 8, 1945], all the troops were gathered there, again, with nothing to do. They dragooned me into teaching French to guards and drivers. ... Most of them were not high school graduates, but they were great French students, because they had French girlfriends, and didn't know grammar. So, we sat there and the thought was, well, everybody would be shipped to Japan. ... That was the expectation, and then came the bombing. Ruth and I were once in Nagasaki, and there were young Americans saying, "How could the Americans have done this? How could the Americans have done this?" If it were not for the atom bombs, we would have had to attack Japan. It would have been a loss of a million people. So, we did think about that.

SI: What about V-E Day itself? Was there a celebration?

MH: Well, prior to that, I forgot to mention, we were walking along the City of Jambes and there were black flags hanging out of all the windows. So, I went up to one of the houses and said, "What's happening?" and they said, "Roosevelt died." That's how we found out. There probably were great celebrations, but, as soon as V-E Day occurred, we jumped in our jeeps and drove to West Germany. [laughter] There was no time for celebration. So, there must have been, there must have been.

SI: Normally, were you billeted in houses or tents in the field? What was your chow like? What were everyday creature comforts like for you?

MH: During the [time] in Germany?

SI: No, before V-E Day, in the combat phase.

MH: Well, we were back in Jambes, we were living on C rations, just canned World War I C rations, meat and beans. It was awful. One day, we were walking along a railroad track and we found little packets in English, "Cream" "Sugar," and we found out that the German prisoners were getting a new C ration, far superior to what we were getting. We were billeted in an unheated school there, cold as the dickens, and I had about six blankets. [laughter] ... Ruth had sent me packets, little things, you add water and rub them and they turn hot, stay hot for eight hours. That's what every day was like.

SI: Due to the isolation of your unit, were there logistical problems in getting resupplied?

MH: What supplies, C rations?

SI: Supplies like food and fuel for the jeeps.

MH: I never thought about it. I don't know. I used the GI gas in a very good way. I smoked a pipe and I had a Zippo lighter. ... You couldn't get lighter fluid, so, I used GI gas. ... The flame was this high and it would shoot black smoke. [laughter] There was a motor pool. I never thought about this. They probably got gas regularly, somehow. I don't know; good question.

SI: You came back to the United States and you were mustered out of the Army at Fort Monmouth. Did you want to go immediately back to school or find a job? What was your goal at that point?

MH: The first goal was to find a job, in languages. Did I tell you about it, yes, Professor Billetdoux? I told you he got me a job, which I didn't get. So, I got a temporary job in Boonton, New Jersey, teaching Spanish. We lived with Ruth's parents in Newark, New Jersey. The next thing was, ... I got a job [at] St. Lawrence University in far northern New York, teaching Spanish and ... German and we did that. One of my main objectives was always to be with Ruth. So, we were separated ... during the war, and then, at the job in St. Lawrence, one reason I took it was, they promised housing, which was very difficult [to get] in those days. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

MH: I got a job in St. Lawrence University, teaching Spanish and German. It was great, it was great. It was far northern New York, a liberal arts university, and we had privileges. The salary was nothing much, but the privileges, free lecture series, free concert series, free everything, and there was a free ... athletic evening. Every Tuesday, they closed the gym and Ruth would fence. Her favorite opponent was six-[foot]-six and left-handed. When we came out of the gym, the temperature was twenty below all the time. ... We had a very, very rich cultural life, very, very good friends, wonderful life, but I didn't have a PhD, which was a major problem. We left St. Lawrence and went to Columbia. ... We'd been to Columbia summers, every summer, living in Camp Shanks, for the PhD, but I finally had to do it, had to do it. [Editor's Note: Camp Shanks was originally a major pre-embarkation camp for the European Theater. In the postwar period, veterans taking advantage of the GI Bill by attending one of the nearby universities lived on its grounds, which became known as Shanks Village, Rockland County.] We were separated one semester until they gave us housing. At Columbia, I passed the three-hour Latin, four-hour German, was a three-day written exam, passed the orals, everything, and two things happened. Ruth got TB [tuberculosis] and had to be in a TB sanatorium for a couple of years, and I definitely needed a job. There's a three-man committee that judges. Nowadays, if two approve, that's it. In those days, all three had to approve. The main director, the leading authority on Montaigne in the world, approved, the second man approved, the third man wanted me to change the style. I just had no time, no time. The dean at Columbia, two years ago, personally apologized to me for this. So, I applied for the government, a job, and Ruth was in the sanatorium. I get a telegram, "Report for duty nine AM, 2020 Twentieth Street Northwest, Washington, DC." What the heck was that? Who was that? It was CIA. So, I got a job with CIA, and they're the ones who promised a Romance language. [laughter] It was Romanian, and so, I became an expert on Eastern Europe and I was there five years. It was five years lost in my career, because I couldn't put it down in a résumé.

SI: You could not even say that you had worked for the CIA.

MH: At that time, no, then. Now, I can say that. I can now say that.

SI: Can you say more about what you did there?

MH: Yes. I reported on Eastern Europe satellites and wrote stuff on their economy and political situation, and I can tell you two episodes. It went very well, it was very important work, it was great; the two episodes are exceptions. When I reported for work, my supervisor was in a wheelchair. He'd got polio in the OSS [Office of Special Services] overseas. He told me that we were going to be in a "soup pool." I said, "What's a soup pool?" He said, "I can't get around, so, you're my assistant. You're going to make soup for me every noontime, and the only soup I eat is bean soup." So, for a whole year, I made him bean soup [laughter] and, when a more junior person came along, I gave it to them. The other episode; this was not the covert part of CIA, it was the overt part. ... I wrote a lengthy report on something and they summoned me to the covert part, the super, super secret [part]. ... They put me in a cage, literally, and a lady came along to ask questions about my report. So, I said to her, "Give me a copy." She said, "Oh, no, I'm not allowed to show it to you." I said, "But, I wrote it." "I cannot show it to you," and so, she'd look like this [at the report] and ask me questions. So, there's a little bit of stupidity there, and, also, I learned what a bureaucracy is like for the first time. We translated an entire book about Romania and turned it in and the lady who was in charge of editorial says, "You've got to rewrite all the topic and chapter headings." I said, "That's ludicrous. I won't do it." She appealed to [the] division chief, who said he always ruled in favor of editorial. So, we had to, the secretaries had to, retype this four-hundred-page book, and so, you learned, in a bureaucracy, things work that way.

SI: Were your reports based on information coming out of these countries or were you just examining the literature that had already been written?

MH: Newspapers, magazines and secret documents, yes, but it was great. I never really had to look for a job, except when Billetdoux sent me. So, after about five years, people from the State Department, with whom I'd been in contact, offered me a job. I said, "Sure," and so, I transferred to the Office of Intelligence Research, OIR, of the State Department. ... There, we wrote real analytical reports, and I was there about five years or six years, on Eastern Europe, and we wrote national intelligence summaries and estimates, all secret at that time, about the Eastern European countries, and they were very significant and very used.

SI: I just want to get out the questionnaire, so that I can see the chronology.

MH: Yes. The CIA was 1951 to about 1955, approximately, and the State Department was 1956 to about 1960 or '61. Again, I'll tell you about one report. During the Hungarian Revolution [of 1956], yes, I was asked to write an evaluation of what was happening. ... I wrote it and my supervisor was aghast. He said, "You can't say this. You can't say this. What you have to say is, 'All tendencies seem to indicate the possibility of an eventual possible happening,'" and every sentence had to be hedge, hedge, hedge, [laughter] so that no matter what happened, we were right. ... So, I learned to write in a weasely way.

SI: Do you remember what you intended to write in the report?

MH: Yes, I think--it was so long ago--that the Russians were powerful, they want to take over, the Hungarian Government was going to collapse. There were going to be a lot of arrests, and

it's going to be a very ticklish situation, from our point-of-view; can't talk like that. ... I wrote a number of national intelligence estimates, predicting, national intelligence reports, deeply analytical, daily developments briefs. For example, I volunteered, ... once a month, to spend a day in the intelligence room in the morning, five-thirty. There were tickers from the intelligence [agencies] and secret reports from Eastern Europe, and I had to analyze it, write a one-half page summary of every event, which was going to go to the Secretary and to the President. Eisenhower, at that time, let it be known that he wouldn't read anything over half a page, and so, that went on, very, very satisfying. It was important stuff. Suddenly, I got an offer; no, what happened? I know, there were two classes of people there, Foreign Service Officer, who were the cream, who got all the privileges, and civil servants. I was a civil servant, and I didn't like the fact that the chiefs always had to be intelligence officers, I mean Foreign Service Officers, somebody who would be brought from New Guinea and put in charge, who knew nothing. ... I got upset about that. So, I applied for some jobs elsewhere and I got a job. ... Oh, my final job at the State Department was, "Write an estimate of what would happen if Tito died," and it went to each echelon, rewrote a part, rewrote a part, rewrote a part, rewrote a part, and heaven knows what ever happened to it. So, I got an offer in the Labor Department, which I took. It was the Division of Foreign Labor, DFLC. ... I was in charge of a branch of about twenty-nine people, doing, you might say, intelligence work, but totally unclassified, writing reports on what happened all over the world in the labor field. ... There was a magazine, *Labor Developments Abroad*, of which I was the editor, daily developments and country reports, and I was there for about five or six years, in charge of this group. It was very much appreciated work. Again, I got dissatisfied. I've told our children, "After five years in a particular job, you see what the problems are and you can never solve them, because of the system or the chiefs." So, we produced a lot of good stuff in [the] Division of Foreign Labor Conditions, DFLC, and it was great. There were two problems. I always talk about the problems. The deputy division chief had been ... a proofreader and he set rules which were unbelievable. Rule number one, on letters, the ... address couldn't be more than five lines, and we were corresponding with foreign agencies, name, rank, position, name of the agency, name of the ministry, country, zip code. It was terrible, and the other thing is, we were getting significant requests from Congress, particularly from my favorite, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and they couldn't be cleared. [Editor's Note: Democrat Daniel Patrick Moynihan represented his New York district in Congress from 1976 to 2000 and served as Ambassador to the United Nations.] This guy wouldn't clear them. So, we had a clandestine thing going in which these things were given to the Congressional people with the proviso they never thank us, never say who did it. ... I became quite friendly with Moynihan. In fact, was it from ... there? no, [in] my subsequent job, I got to testify before him. The other story I have to tell about the Division of Foreign Labor Conditions, really, things were very well, at that time, equal treatment, you know, for African-Americans; what's the technical name for it?

SI: Affirmative action?

MH: That's it, affirmative action. They were looking to make somebody a professional, and all the clerks were; like, what were they? They were not professional. We had a very, very nice guy, Oscar, a very sweet guy, and they decide to make him a professional. ... It was ruled, if he could write a country report, a long, analytical [report], they'd make him a professional. There was no way. So, it was given to me to write the report. I did, and he got promoted to

professional. Simultaneously, the State Department was looking for labor attachés, African-American, and they spotted Oscar and they made him a labor attaché, but he was totally unqualified, totally. Poor guy, he was a victim of the system. Well, after ... the usual five or six years, I got an offer in Social Security. I think a promotion was promised, and this was in 1968, and I switched over to Social Security, where I was very, very happy. ... I was Director of International Comparative Studies, ... who were able to do truly analytical studies, and the Commissioner called me, "The guy who discovered for America the impact of an aging population," and I and the staff did very good work. We had many, many reports, all of which were published, and, let's see, I got a trip to Romania, which was a remarkable experience. I was sent there with a diplomatic passport and traveled all over the country with people from the embassy. One time, I made a trip by myself, which wasn't permitted, and I got the flu, or something like that, was holed up in a hotel by myself. It was quite an experience. There were many, many adventures, too many to tell you. ...

SI: I have seen in a few places that you have made forty trips to Europe. When did that begin?

MH: I went to Europe in the Army. I went to Europe for [the] State Department, and then, once on vacation, Ruth and I went, and then, all the rest, sort of in connection with work. ... Habitually, I would travel, and then, in the last years, Ruth and I would travel with our boss and his wife. ... Being able to speak the language made a hundred percent difference. It made so much difference, so much difference. For example, years later, we were in Italy, in a little town, and there was a store that sold ... dishware. Limoges is very expensive French pottery, and the "G" was a little bit blurred and I asked the person, in Italian, "Is it really Limoges?" [They] said, "No, it's (Limones?)," [laughter] "Lemons," but tourists would buy this stuff. ... Another time, we're in Italy, in a hotel which we called "*Troppo Tardi*," "Too late." We went down to dinner the first day and they closed at nine-thirty, but it was nine, too late, "*Troppo tardi*." ... Ruth ordered, at breakfast, decaf coffee and I ordered regular coffee and the waiter brought one pot. ... I said, in Italian, "Where's the decaffeinated?" "Here." "*Qui, signore*. Where's the regular?" We hadn't asked him to separate them; he was right. ... Anyway, we had an infinite number of adventures. ... We had a conference and we went to our company conference--that's the next part of life--about twenty times, so, all together, forty times, all over Europe.

SI: You were with the Social Security Administration for the longest time out of your jobs before 1981.

MH: Yes, 1968 until '81, and it was great. They sent me on frequent trips, and Ruth came along, always. ... We put out very, very good reports which went to Congress. I was invited to testify in Congress, particularly that time before Moynihan, and it was really great fun. Everything was great.

SI: You have just recently published a book related to this, *The Pension Mountain*.

MH: Yes.

SI: Can you just elaborate a little bit on your work in studying the aging population and its impact on Social Security?

MH: Yes. While I was at Social Security, I discovered that the European countries were having these terrible problems and they were taking action on it, and America wasn't even aware of it at that time. ... So, I wrote about it, and then, Commissioner [Stanford G.] Ross said, "Hey, this is important stuff," and he decided to go to Europe and he wanted me to go along. His itinerary was, I think, Bonn one day, Rome the next day, Paris the next day, Berlin the next day. I said, "No, thank you," and I sent one of my colleagues. ... He grabbed that colleague to be a speechwriter, but, anyway, he wanted me to write more and more on this subject, which I did, and, finally, ... the Senate ... Special Committee on Aging, asked me to do a report for them, which I did. ... It was great in Social Security, great friends, great supervisors, everything was wonderful, but, usually, something happens every five years. There's a guy named Bob Myers. He's the leading, what do you call them? I temporarily forgot the word, in the whole country.

SI: Expert?

MH: No, no. They work for insurance companies.

SI: Actuary?

MH: ... Yes, he was the very leading actuary in the country and he'd once been in Social Security, the leading actuary. The head of the Office of Research and Statistics was a dynamic lady named Ida Merriam. She always clashed with Bob Myers. She did things he didn't approve. ... Therefore, after she retired, he was also gone, but he was reappointed Chief Actuary and he was actually, basically, Acting Director of Social Security. His first act was to get even with Ida Merriam, first act. A piddling little example of that was, we put out a publication called *Social Security Programs Throughout the World*, which is internationally recognized. He was the actuary for the Trust Territories of the Pacific. We refused to contain that, to publish that. His first act was to order me to put it back in. Ida Merriam had arranged, for many years, ... a contract with the International Social Security Association, ISSA, in Geneva. They supplied us material for Social Security programs throughout the world, which they got from their member countries. Bob Myers sent somebody over there and canceled the contract without informing me. Strike three; the press office wanted to interview Myers and me, and I said, "Okay, but not together." They put us together. The interview was by a lady from *Consumer Reports*. He got her to crying. He was just awful, and so, I decided, "This is too much." The key stroke was my boss, Bruce Spencer, boss-to-be, had had me speak at conferences overseas. There was one in Germany and I didn't show up. Myers cancelled all travel [but] for himself, but ... I was invited to speak in Spain and he took it for himself. They didn't want him and said, "No." So, Bruce Spencer came along and he said, "What happened to you?" and I told him about Myers and all. He says, "You don't have to take this. Come to work for me." I did, I did. [laughter] I resigned and went to work for the International Benefits Information Service in Chicago. This is ... a publisher that publishes things worldwide on pensions, health plans, social security compensation, employee benefits. His first act was, he said there was a world insurance conference in Philadelphia, would I go and cover it? I did. I called him up and ... I said, "When do you want the report?" He said, "Tomorrow." I laughed and laughed and laughed. He meant it. I did it in one day, and the government would have taken up to a year, because you have to have it cleared by your supervisor, his supervisor, his supervisor and by publications. ... So, I

went to work for them and I'm still working for them. They sold it and there's a new company, but I'm still working for them, part-time, and we traveled every year to Europe.

SI: Thank you for the overview of your career. Is there anything else that you want to add to that before I leave?

MH: Oh, the book, the book.

SI: Yes, please, tell me more about the book.

MH: About three years ago, the children, two of them in California, began to say, "Why don't you do something about getting your degree?" [laughter] I said, "That's history." They wrote to Columbia and Columbia said, "Well, we'll reconsider. Have you got a copy of the dissertation?" Miraculously, we found one downstairs in our locker, and they wanted transcripts of my entire scholastic record, and we sent for that. ... Then, they sent a questionnaire, asking, "What is your job objective for next year? What is your career objective for the next five years?" I couldn't answer these questions, they were so ridiculous. I gave them to our son, Rob, and he answered, I don't know how, and they said, "Okay." They said they granted it retroactive to 1954. [laughter] I went to Columbia to the ceremony and they took a lot of pictures and wrote a lot of stories about it, and the Dean came up to me and personally apologized for what had happened there. He said, "It was undeserved and improper," and so, as of now, ... we're living in a senior community. Ruth, my wife, Ruth, she's in *Who's Who*. [laughter]

SI: She is a fine arts photographer.

MH: Yes. She's had exhibits, as part of her group, in India, China, Egypt, Russia, and so, she continues to be active in the art thing, and I'm still working part-time for IBIS and writing other articles. ... The book, *The Pension Mountain*, discusses the impact of an aging population on Social Security. In a word, ... it asks, "Why couldn't President Bush change our Social Security? Who's stopping him?" and I say not the Democrats, not AARP; Chancellor Bismarck. Chancellor Bismarck, ... in 1891, created social security. He set up rules, which we follow to this day, and it's impossible to change them, like we can't change old customs, like men wearing pants. ... The point is, the Europeans have realized, long ago, these problems, have sought solutions, and we're only now discovering the solutions, and the solutions are political. That's the problem. That's it. My latest book, *The Agony of Victory* is to appear in 2011. It is a fictional version of the 1930s Rutgers football season.

SI: You and your wife have had three children.

MH: We have three children, one, a physicist, Jeffrey, who's been working for the National Institute of Science and Technology, our daughter, Jill, who is a math teacher, but has been on the school board in Marin County, California, and our son, Rob, who's a PhD in microbiology and is in drug development, the development of new drugs.

SI: I can probably ask you a lot more questions, but I do not want to take up your whole day. Is there anything that you would like to add to the record?

MH: ... Just many details, just many details.

SI: When you get this transcript back, you can add any details we missed today.

MH: Okay, yes.

SI: Thank you very much, I appreciate all your time.

MH: Thank you for taking the time. You must be starved.

SI: No, I am fine.

MH: Can we invite you to lunch?

SI: Sure.

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Reviewed by Benjamin Asch 10/21/10

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 12/21/10

Reviewed by Max Horlick 1/20/11